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WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
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Drawn by C. Stanfield — Engraved by E. F

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LORD BYRON.

VOL. III.

wn by C. Stanfield from a Sketch by W. Page.

Engraved by E.P

A Street in Athens.

LONDON.
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1832.

THE

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OF

LORD BYRON:

WITH

HIS LETTERS AND JOURNALS,

AND HIS LIFE,

BY THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

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LETTERS AND JOURNALS

OF

LORD BYRON:

WITH NOTICES OF HIS LIFE,

BY

THOMAS MOORE.

NOTICES

OF THE

LIFE OF LORD BYRON.

" JOURNAL, 1814.

" February 18.

" BETTER than a month since I last journalised: — most of it out of London and at Notts., but a busy one and a pleasant, at least three weeks of it. On my return, I find all the newspapers in hysterics *,

* Immediately on the appearance of The Corsair, (with those obnoxious verses, " Weep, daughter of a royal line," appended to it,) a series of attacks, not confined to Lord Byron himself, but aimed also at all those who had lately become his friends, was commenced in the Courier and Morning Post, and carried on through the greater part of the months of February and March. The point selected by these writers, as a ground of censure on the poet, was one which *now*, perhaps, even themselves would agree to class among his claims to praise, — namely, the atonement which he had endeavoured to make for the youthful violence of his Satire by a measure of justice, amiable even in its overflowings, to every one whom he conceived he had wronged.

Notwithstanding the careless tone in which, here and elsewhere, he speaks of these assaults, it is evident that they annoyed him; — an effect which, in reading them over now, we

and town in an uproar, on the avowal and republication of two stanzas on Princess Charlotte's weeping at Regency's speech to Lauderdale in 1812. They are daily at it still; — some of the abuse good, all of it hearty. They talk of a motion in our House upon it — be it so.

"Got up — redde the Morning Post, containing the battle of Buonaparte, the destruction of the Custom-house, and a paragraph on me as long as my pedigree, and vituperative, as usual.

"Hobhouse is returned to England. He is my best friend, the most lively, and a man of the most sterling talents extant.

"'The Corsair' has been conceived, written, published, &c. since I last took up this journal. They tell me it has great success; — it was written *con amore*, and much from *existence*. Murray is satisfied with its progress; and if the public are equally so with the perusal, there 's an end of the matter.

"Nine o'clock.

"Been to Hanson's on business. Saw Rogers, and had a note from Lady Melbourne, who says, it

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should be apt to wonder they could produce, did we not recollect the property which Dryden attributes to "small wits," in common with certain other small animals: —

"We scarce could know they live, but that they *bite*."

The following is a specimen of the terms in which these party scribes could then speak of one of the masters of English song: — "They might have slept in oblivion with Lord Carlisle's Dramas and Lord Byron's Poems." — "Some certainly extol Lord Byron's Poem much, but most of the best judges place his Lordship rather low in the list of our minor poets."

is said I am 'much out of spirits.' I wonder if I really am or not? I have certainly enough of 'that perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart,' and it is better they should believe it to be the result of these attacks than of the real cause; but — ay, ay, always *but*, to the end of the chapter.

"Hobhouse has told me ten thousand anecdotes of Napoleon, all good and true. My friend H. is the most entertaining of companions, and a fine fellow to boot.

"Redde a little — wrote notes and letters, and am alone, which Locke says, is bad company. 'Be not solitary, be not idle.' — Um! — the idleness is troublesome; but I can't see so much to regret in the solitude. The more I see of men, the less I like them. If I could but say so of women too, all would be well. Why can't I? I am now six-and-twenty; my passions have had enough to cool them; my affections more than enough to wither them, — and yet — and yet — always *yet* and *but* — 'Excellent well, you are a fishmonger — get thee to a nunnery.' — 'They fool me to the top of my bent.'

"Midnight.

"Began a letter, which I threw into the fire. Redde — but to little purpose. Did not visit Hobhouse, as I promised and ought. No matter, the loss is mine. Smoked cigars.

"Napoleon! — this week will decide his fate. All seems against him; but I believe and hope he will win — at least, beat back the invaders. What right have we to prescribe sovereigns to France? Oh for

a Republic! 'Brutus, thou sleepest.' Hobhouse abounds in continental anecdotes of this extraordinary man; all in favour of his intellect and courage, but against his *bonhommie*. No wonder;—how should he, who knows mankind well, do other than despise and abhor them?

"The greater the equality, the more impartially evil is distributed, and becomes lighter by the division among so many — therefore, a Republic!

"More notes from Mad. de ** unanswered — and so they shall remain. I admire her abilities, but really her society is overwhelming — an avalanche that buries one in glittering nonsense — all snow and sophistry.

"Shall I go to Mackintosh's on Tuesday? um! — I did not go to Marquis Lansdowne's, nor to Miss Berry's, though both are pleasant. So is Sir James's, — but I don't know — I believe one is not the better for parties; at least, unless some *regnante* is there.

"I wonder how the deuce any body could make such a world; for what purpose dandies, for instance, were ordained — and kings — and fellows of colleges — and women of 'a certain age' — and many men of any age — and myself, most of all!

"'Divesne prisco et natus ab Inacho,
Nil interest, an pauper, et infimâ
De gente, sub dio moreris,
Victima nil miserantis Orci.
* * * *
Omnes eodem cogimur.'

"Is there any thing beyond? — *who* knows? *He* that can't tell. Who tells that there *is?* He who

don't know. And when shall he know? perhaps, when he don't expect, and generally when he don't wish it. In this last respect, however, all are not alike: it depends a good deal upon education, — something upon nerves and habits — but most upon digestion.

" Saturday, Feb. 19.

" Just returned from seeing Kean in Richard. By Jove, he is a soul! Life — nature — truth without exaggeration or diminution. Kemble's Hamlet is perfect; — but Hamlet is not Nature. Richard is a man; and Kean is Richard. Now to my own concerns.

" Went to Waite's. Teeth all right and white; but he says that I grind them in my sleep and chip the edges. That same sleep is no friend of mine, though I court him sometimes for half the twenty-four.

" February 20.

" Got up and tore out two leaves of this Journal — I don't know why. Hodgson just called and gone. He has much *bonhommie* with his other good qualities, and more talent than he has yet had credit for beyond his circle.

" An invitation to dine at Holland House to meet Kean. He is worth meeting; and I hope, by getting into good society, he will be prevented from falling like Cooke. He is greater now on the stage, and off he should never be less. There is a stupid and under-rating criticism upon him in one of the newspapers. I thought that, last night, though great, he rather under-acted more than the first time. This may be the effect of these cavils; but I hope he has

more sense than to mind them. He cannot expect to maintain his present eminence, or to advance still higher, without the envy of his green-room fellows, and the nibbling of their admirers. But, if he don't beat them all, why then—merit hath no purchase in 'these coster-monger days.'

"I wish that I had a talent for the drama; I would write a tragedy *now*. But no,—it is gone. Hodgson talks of one,—he will do it well;—and I think M—e should try. He has wonderful powers, and much variety; besides, he has lived and felt. To write so as to bring home to the heart, the heart must have been tried,—but, perhaps, ceased to be so. While you are under the influence of passions, you only feel, but cannot describe them,—any more than, when in action, you could turn round and tell the story to your next neighbour! When all is over,—all, all, and irrevocable,—trust to memory —she is then but too faithful.

"Went out, and answered some letters, yawned now and then, and redde the Robbers. Fine,—but Fiesco is better; and Alfieri and Monti's Aristodemo *best*. They are more equal than the Tedeschi dramatists.

"Answered—or, rather acknowledged—the receipt of young Reynolds's Poem, Safie. The lad is clever, but much of his thoughts are borrowed,—*whence*, the Reviewers may find out. I hate discouraging a young one; and I think,—though wild and more oriental than he would be, had he seen the scenes where he has placed his tale,—that he has much talent, and, certainly, fire enough.

" Received a very singular epistle; and the mode of its conveyance, through Lord H.'s hands, as curious as the letter itself. But it was gratifying and pretty.

" Sunday, February 27.

" Here I am, alone, instead of dining at Lord H.'s, where I was asked,—but not inclined to go any where. Hobhouse says I am growing a *loup garou*, — a solitary hobgoblin. True; — 'I am myself alone.' The last week has been passed in reading — seeing plays — now and then visiters — sometimes yawning and sometimes sighing, but no writing, — save of letters. If I could always read, I should never feel the want of society. Do I regret it? — um! — 'Man delights not me,' and only one woman — at a time.

" There is something to me very softening in the presence of a woman, — some strange influence, even if one is not in love with them, — which I cannot at all account for, having no very high opinion of the sex. But yet, — I always feel in better humour with myself and every thing else, if there is a woman within ken. Even Mrs. Mule *, my fire-

* This ancient housemaid, of whose gaunt and witch-like appearance it would be impossible to convey any idea but by the pencil, furnished one among the numerous instances of Lord Byron's proneness to attach himself to any thing, however homely, that had once enlisted his good nature in its behalf, and become associated with his thoughts. He first found this old woman at his lodgings in Bennet Street, where, for a whole season, she was the perpetual scarecrow of his visiters. When, next year, he took chambers in Albany, one of the great advan-

lighter, — the most ancient and withered of her kind, — and (except to myself) not the best-tempered — always makes me laugh, — no difficult task when I am 'i' the vein.'

"Heigho! I would I were in mine island! — I am not well; and yet I look in good health. At times, I fear, 'I am not in my perfect mind;'— and yet my heart and head have stood many a crash, and what should ail them now? They prey upon themselves, and I am sick — sick — 'Prithee, undo this button — why should a cat, a rat, a dog have life — and *thou* no life at all?' Six-and-twenty years, as they call them, why, I might and should have been a Pasha by this time. 'I 'gin to be a weary of the sun.'

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tages which his friends looked to in the change was, that they should get rid of this phantom. But, no, — there she was again — he had actually brought her with him from Bennet Street. The following year saw him married, and, with a regular establishment of servants, in Piccadilly; and here, — as Mrs. Mule had not made her appearance to any of the visiters, — it was concluded, rashly, that the witch had vanished. One of those friends, however, who had most fondly indulged in this persuasion, happening to call one day when all the male part of the establishment were abroad, saw, to his dismay, the door opened by the same grim personage, improved considerably in point of habiliments since he last saw her, and keeping pace with the increased scale of her master's household, as a new peruke, and other symptoms of promotion, testified. When asked "how he came to carry this old woman about with him from place to place," Lord Byron's only answer was, "The poor old devil was so kind to me."

"Buonaparte is not yet beaten; but has rebutted Blucher, and repiqued Swartzenburg. This it is to have a head. If he again wins, 'Væ victis!'

"Sunday, March 6.

"On Tuesday last dined with Rogers,—Madame de Staël, Mackintosh, Sheridan, Erskine, and Payne Knight, Lady Donegall and Miss R. there. Sheridan told a very good story of himself and Madame de Recamier's handkerchief; Erskine a few stories of himself only. *She* is going to write a big book about England, she says;—I believe her. Asked by her how I liked Miss * *'s thing, called * *, and answered (very sincerely) that I thought it very bad for *her*, and worse than any of the others. Afterwards thought it possible Lady Donegall, being Irish, might be a patroness of * *, and was rather sorry for my opinion, as I hate putting people into fusses, either with themselves or their favourites; it looks as if one did it on purpose. The party went off very well, and the fish was very much to my gusto. But we got up too soon after the women; and Mrs. Corinne always lingers so long after dinner that we wish her in — the drawing-room.

"To-day C. called, and while sitting here, in came Merivale. During our colloquy, C. (ignorant that M. was the writer) abused the 'mawkishness of the Quarterly Review of Grimm's Correspondence.' I (knowing the secret) changed the conversation as soon as I could; and C. went away, quite convinced of having made the most favourable impression on his new acquaintance. Merivale is luckily a very

good-natured fellow, or, God he knows what might have been engendered from such a malaprop. I did not look at him while this was going on, but I felt like a coal — for I like Merivale, as well as the article in question.

" Asked to Lady Keith's to-morrow evening — I think I will go; but it is the first party invitation I have accepted this 'season,' as the learned Fletcher called it, when that youngest brat of Lady * *'s cut my eye and cheek open with a misdirected pebble — 'Never mind, my Lord, the scar will be gone before the *season;*' as if one's eye was of no importance in the mean time.

" Lord Erskine called, and gave me his famous pamphlet, with a marginal note and corrections in his handwriting. Sent it to be bound superbly, and shall treasure it.

" Sent my fine print of Napoleon to be framed. It *is* framed; and the Emperor becomes his robes as if he had been hatched in them.

" March 7.

" Rose at seven — ready by half-past eight — went to Mr. Hanson's, Berkeley Square — went to church with his eldest daughter, Mary Anne (a good girl), and gave her away to the Earl of Portsmouth. Saw her fairly a countess — congratulated the family and groom (bride) — drank a bumper of wine (wholesome sherris) to their felicity, and all that — and came home. Asked to stay to dinner, but could not. At three sat to Phillips for faces. Called on Lady M. — I like her so well, that I always stay too long. (Mem. to mend of that.)

"Passed the evening with Hobhouse, who has begun a poem, which promises highly; — wish he would go on with it. Heard some curious extracts from a life of Morosini, the blundering Venetian, who blew up the Acropolis at Athens with a bomb, and be d—d to him! Waxed sleepy — just come home — must go to bed, and am engaged to meet Sheridan to-morrow at Rogers's.

"Queer ceremony that same of marriage — saw many abroad, Greek and Catholic — one, at *home*, many years ago. There be some strange phrases in the prologue (the exhortation), which made me turn away, not to laugh in the face of the surpliceman. Made one blunder, when I joined the hands of the happy — rammed their left hands, by mistake, into one another. Corrected it — bustled back to the altar-rail, and said 'Amen.' Portsmouth responded as if he had got the whole by heart; and, if any thing, was rather before the priest. It is now midnight, and * * *.

"March 10. Thor's Day.

"On Tuesday dined with Rogers, — Mackintosh, Sheridan, Sharpe, — much talk, and good, — all, except my own little prattlement. Much of old times — Horne Tooke — the Trials — evidence of Sheridan, and anecdotes of those times, when *I*, alas! was an infant. If I had been a man, I would have made an English Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

"Set down Sheridan at Brookes's, — where, by the by, he could not have well set down himself, as he and I were the only drinkers. Sherry means to

stand for Westminster, as Cochrane (the stock-jobbing hoaxer) must vacate. Brougham is a candidate. I fear for poor dear Sherry. Both have talents of the highest order, but the youngster has *yet* a character. We shall see, if he lives to Sherry's age, how he will pass over the redhot ploughshares of public life. I don't know why, but I hate to see the *old* ones lose; particularly Sheridan, notwithstanding all his *méchanceté*.

"Received many, and the kindest, thanks from Lady Portsmouth, *père* and *mère*, for my match-making. I don't regret it, as she looks the countess well, and is a very good girl. It is odd how well she carries her new honours. She looks a different woman, and high-bred, too. I had no idea that I could make so good a peeress.

"Went to the play with Hobhouse. Mrs. Jordan superlative in Hoyden, and Jones well enough in Foppington. *What plays!* what wit! — helas! Congreve and Vanbrugh are your only comedy. Our society is too insipid now for the like copy. Would *not* go to Lady Keith's. Hobhouse thought it odd. I wonder *he* should like parties. If one is in love, and wants to break a commandment and covet any thing that is there, they do very well. But to go out amongst the mere herd, without a motive, pleasure, or pursuit — 'sdeath! 'I'll none of it.' He told me an odd report, — that *I* am the actual Conrad, the veritable Corsair, and that part of my travels are supposed to have passed in privacy. Um! — people sometimes hit near the truth; but never the whole truth. H. don't know what I was

about the year after he left the Levant; nor does any one — nor — nor — nor — however, it is a lie — but, 'I doubt the equivocation of the fiend that lies like truth!'

"I shall have letters of importance to-morrow. Which, * *, * *, or * *? heigho! — * * is in my heart, * * in my head, * * in my eye, and the *single* one, Heaven knows where. All write, and will be answered. 'Since I have crept in favour with myself, I must maintain it;' but *I* never 'mistook my person,' though I think others have.

"* * called to-day in great despair about his mistress, who has taken a freak of * * *. He began a letter to her, but was obliged to stop short — I finished it for him, and he copied and sent it. If *he* holds out, and keeps to my instructions of affected indifference, she will lower her colours. If she don't, he will, at least, get rid of her, and she don't seem much worth keeping. But the poor lad is in love — if that is the case, she will win. When they once discover their power, *finita e la musica.*

"Sleepy, and must go to bed.

"Tuesday, March 15.

"Dined yesterday with R., Mackintosh, and Sharpe. Sheridan could not come. Sharpe told several very amusing anecdotes of Henderson, the actor. Stayed till late, and came home, having drank so much *tea*, that I did not get to sleep till six this morning. R. says I am to be in *this* Quarterly — cut up, I presume, as they 'hate us youth.' *N'importe.* As Sharpe was passing by the doors of

some debating society (the Westminster Forum), in his way to dinner, he saw rubricked on the walls *Scott*'s name and *mine*—'Which the best poet?' being the question of the evening; and I suppose all the Templars and *would bes* took our rhymes in vain, in the course of the controversy. Which had the greater show of hands, I neither know nor care; but I feel the coupling of the names as a compliment,—though I think Scott deserves better company.

"W. W. called—Lord Erskine, Lord Holland, &c. &c. Wrote to * * the Corsair report. She says she don't wonder, since 'Conrad is so *like*.' It is odd that one, who knows me so thoroughly, should tell me this to my face. However, if she don't know, nobody can.

"Mackintosh is, it seems, the writer of the defensive letter in the Morning Chronicle. If so, it is very kind, and more than I did for myself.

"Told Murray to secure for me Bandello's Italian Novels at the sale to-morrow. To me they will be *nuts*. Redde a satire on myself, called 'Anti-Byron,' and told Murray to publish it if he liked. The object of the author is to prove me an atheist and a systematic conspirator against law and government. Some of the verse is good; the prose I don't quite understand. He asserts that my 'deleterious works' have had 'an effect upon civil society, which requires,' &c. &c. &c. and his own poetry. It is a lengthy poem, and a long preface, with a harmonious title-page. Like the fly in the fable, I seem to have got upon a wheel which makes much dust; but, un-

like the said fly, I do not take it all for my own raising.

"A letter from *Bella*, which I answered. I shall be in love with her again, if I don't take care.

"I shall begin a more regular system of reading soon.

"Thursday, March 17.

"I have been sparring with Jackson for exercise this morning; and mean to continue and renew my acquaintance with the muffles. My chest, and arms, and wind are in very good plight, and I am not in flesh. I used to be a hard hitter, and my arms are very long for my height (5 feet 8½ inches). At any rate, exercise is good, and this the severest of all; fencing and the broad-sword never fatigued me half so much.

"Redde the 'Quarrels of Authors' (another sort of *sparring*) — a new work, by that most entertaining and researching writer, Israeli. They seem to be an irritable set, and I wish myself well out of it. 'I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat.' What the devil had I to do with scribbling? It is too late to enquire, and all regret is useless. But, an' it were to do again, — I should write again, I suppose. Such is human nature, at least my share of it; — though I shall think better of myself, if I have sense to stop now. If I have a wife, and that wife has a son — by any body — I will bring up mine heir in the most anti-poetical way — make him a lawyer, or a pirate, or — any thing. But, if he writes too, I shall be sure he is none of mine, and cut him off with a Bank token. Must write a letter — three o'clock.

" Sunday, March 20.

" I intended to go to Lady Hardwicke's, but won't. I always begin the day with a bias towards going to parties; but, as the evening advances, my stimulus fails, and I hardly ever go out — and, when I do, always regret it. This might have been a pleasant one; — at least, the hostess is a very superior woman. Lady Lansdowne's to morrow — Lady Heathcote's Wednesday. Um! — I must spur myself into going to some of them, or it will look like rudeness, and it is better to do as other people do — confound them!

" Redde Machiavel, parts of Chardin, and Sismondi, and Bandello — by starts. Redde the Edinburgh, 44, just come out. In the beginning of the article on 'Edgeworth's Patronage,' I have gotten a high compliment, I perceive. Whether this is creditable to me, I know not; but it does honour to the editor, because he once abused me. Many a man will retract praise; none but a high-spirited mind will revoke its censure, or *can* praise the man it has once attacked. I have often, since my return to England, heard Jeffrey most highly commended by those who know him for things independent of his talents. I admire him for *this* — not because he has *praised me*, (I have been so praised elsewhere and abused, alternately, that mere habit has rendered me as indifferent to both as a man at twenty-six can be to any thing,) but because he is, perhaps, the *only man* who, under the relations in which he and I stand, or stood, with regard to each other, would have had the liberality to act thus; none but a great soul dared hazard it. The height on which he stands

has not made him giddy; — a little scribbler would have gone on cavilling to the end of the chapter. As to the justice of his panegyric, that is matter of taste. There are plenty to question it, and glad, too, of the opportunity.

" Lord Erskine called to-day. He means to carry down his reflections on the war — or rather wars — to the present day. I trust that he will. Must send to Mr. Murray to get the binding of my copy of his pamphlet finished, as Lord E. has promised me to correct it, and add some marginal notes to it. Any thing in his handwriting will be a treasure, which will gather compound interest from years. Erskine has high expectations of Mackintosh's promised History. Undoubtedly it must be a classic, when finished.

" Sparred with Jackson again yesterday morning, and shall to-morrow. I feel all the better for it, in spirits, though my arms and shoulders are very stiff from it. Mem. to attend the pugilistic dinner: — Marquess Huntley is in the chair.

" Lord Erskine thinks that ministers must be in peril of going out. So much the better for him. To me it is the same who are in or out; — we want something more than a change of ministers, and some day we will have it.

" I remember *, in riding from Chrisso to Castri (Delphos), along the sides of Parnassus, I saw six

* Part of this passage has been already extracted, but I have allowed it to remain here in its original position, on account of the singularly sudden manner in which it is introduced.

eagles in the air. It is uncommon to see so many together; and it was the number — not the species, which is common enough — that excited my attention.

"The last bird I ever fired at was an *eaglet*, on the shore of the Gulf of Lepanto, near Vostitza. It was only wounded, and I tried to save it, the eye was so bright; but it pined, and died in a few days; and I never did since, and never will, attempt the death of another bird. I wonder what put these two things into my head just now? I have been reading Sismondi, and there is nothing there that could induce the recollection.

"I am mightily taken with Braccio di Montone, Giovanni Galeazzo, and Eccelino. But the last is *not* Bracciaferro (of the same name), Count of Ravenna, whose history I want to trace. There is a fine engraving in Lavater, from a picture by Fuseli, of *that* Ezzelin, over the body of Meduna, punished by him for a *hitch* in her constancy during his absence in the Crusades. He was right — but I want to know the story.

"Tuesday, March 22.

"Last night, *party* at Lansdowne House. To-night, *party* at Lady Charlotte Greville's — deplorable waste of time, and something of temper. Nothing imparted — nothing acquired — talking without ideas: — if any thing like *thought* in my mind, it was not on the subjects on which we were gabbling. Heigho! — and in this way half London pass what is called life. To-morrow there is Lady Heathcote's

— shall I go? yes — to punish myself for not having a pursuit.

"Let me see — what did I see? The only person who much struck me was Lady S * * d's eldest daughter, Lady C. L. They say she is *not* pretty. I don't know — every thing is pretty that pleases; but there is an air of *soul* about her — and her colour changes — and there is that shyness of the antelope (which I delight in) in her manner so much, that I observed her more than I did any other woman in the rooms, and only looked at any thing else when I thought she might perceive and feel embarrassed by my scrutiny. After all, there may be something of association in this. She is a friend of Augusta's, and whatever she loves I can't help liking.

"Her mother, the Marchioness, talked to me a little; and I was twenty times on the point of asking her to introduce me to *sa fille*, but I stopped short. This comes of that affray with the Carlisles.

"Earl Grey told me laughingly of a paragraph in the last *Moniteur*, which has stated, among other symptoms of rebellion, some particulars of the *sensation* occasioned in all our government gazettes by the 'tear' lines, — *only* amplifying, in its re-statement, an epigram (by the by, no epigram except in the *Greek* acceptation of the word) into a *roman*. I wonder the Couriers, &c. &c., have not translated that part of the Moniteur, with additional comments.

"The Princess of Wales has requested Fuseli to paint from 'The Corsair,' — leaving to him the choice of any passage for the subject: so Mr. Locke tells

me. Tired, jaded, selfish, and supine — must go to bed.

" *Roman*, at least *Romance*, means a song sometimes, as in the Spanish. I suppose this is the Moniteur's meaning, unless he has confused it with ' The Corsair.'

" Albany, March 28.

" This night got into my new apartments, rented of Lord Althorpe, on a lease of seven years. Spacious, and room for my books and sabres. *In* the *house*, too, another advantage. The last few days, or whole week, have been very abstemious, regular in exercise, and yet very *un*well.

" Yesterday, dined *tête-à-tête* at the Cocoa with Scrope Davies — sat from six till midnight — drank between us one bottle of champagne and six of claret, neither of which wines ever affect me. Offered to take Scrope home in my carriage ; but he was tipsy and pious, and I was obliged to leave him on his knees praying to I know not what purpose or pagod. No headach, nor sickness, that night nor to-day. Got up, if any thing, earlier than usual — sparred with Jackson *ad sudorem*, and have been much better in health than for many days. I have heard nothing more from Scrope. Yesterday paid him four thousand eight hundred pounds, a debt of some standing, and which I wished to have paid before. My mind is much relieved by the removal of that *debit*.

" Augusta wants me to make it up with Carlisle. I have refused *every* body else, but I can't deny her any thing ; — so I must e'en do it, though I had as

lief 'drink up Eisel — eat a crocodile.' Let me see — Ward, the Hollands, the Lambs, Rogers, &c. &c. — every body, more or less, have been trying for the last two years to accommodate this *couplet* quarrel to no purpose. I shall laugh if Augusta succeeds.

"Redde a little of many things — shall get in all my books to-morrow. Luckily this room will hold them — with 'ample room and verge, &c. the characters of hell to trace.' I must set about some employment soon; my heart begins to eat *itself* again.

"April 8.

"Out of town six days. On my return, find my poor little pagod, Napoleon, pushed off his pedestal; — the thieves are in Paris. It is his own fault. Like Milo, he would rend the oak*; but it closed again, wedged his hands, and now the beasts — lion, bear, down to the dirtiest jackall — may all tear him. That Muscovite winter *wedged* his arms; — ever since, he has fought with his feet and teeth. The last may still leave their marks; and 'I guess now' (as the Yankees say) that he will yet play them a pass. He is in their rear — between them and their homes. Query — will they ever reach them?

"Saturday, April 9. 1814.

"I mark this day!

"Napoleon Buonaparte has abdicated the throne

* He adopted this thought afterwards in his Ode to Napoleon, as well as most of the historical examples in the following paragraph.

of the world. 'Excellent well.' Methinks Sylla did better; for he revenged and resigned in the height of his sway, red with the slaughter of his foes—the finest instance of glorious contempt of the rascals upon record. Dioclesian did well too—Amurath not amiss, had he become aught except a dervise—Charles the Fifth but so so—but Napoleon, worst of all. What! wait till they were in his capital, and then talk of his readiness to give up what is already gone!! 'What whining monk art thou—what holy cheat?' 'Sdeath!—Dionysius at Corinth was yet a king to this. The 'Isle of Elba' to retire to!—Well—if it had been Caprea, I should have marvelled less. 'I see men's minds are but a parcel of their fortunes.' I am utterly bewildered and confounded.

"I don't know—but I think *I*, even *I* (an insect compared with this creature), have set my life on casts not a millionth part of this man's. But, after all, a crown may be not worth dying for. Yet, to outlive *Lodi* for this!!! Oh that Juvenal or Johnson could rise from the dead! 'Expende—quot libras in duce summo invenies?' I knew they were light in the balance of mortality; but I thought their living dust weighed more *carats*. Alas! this imperial diamond hath a flaw in it, and is now hardly fit to stick in a glazier's pencil:—the pen of the historian won't rate it worth a ducat.

"Psha! 'something too much of this.' But I won't give him up even now; though all his admirers have, 'like the thanes, fallen from him.'

" April 10.

" I do not know that I am happiest when alone; but this I am sure of, that I never am long in the society even of *her* I love, (God knows too well, and the devil probably too,) without a yearning for the company of my lamp and my utterly confused and tumbled-over library. * Even in the day, I send away my carriage oftener than I use or abuse it. *Per esempio,*—I have not stirred out of these rooms for these four days past: but I have sparred for exercise (windows open) with Jackson an hour daily, to attenuate and keep up the ethereal part of me. The more violent the fatigue, the better my spirits for the rest of the day; and then, my evenings have that calm nothingness of languor, which I most delight in. To-day I have boxed one hour—written an ode to Napoleon Buonaparte—copied it—eaten six biscuits—drunk four bottles of soda water—redde away the rest of my time—besides giving poor * * a world of advice about this mistress of his, who is plaguing him into a phthisic and intolerable tediousness. I am a pretty fellow truly to lecture about 'the sect.' No matter, my counsels are all thrown away.

" April 19. 1814.

" There is ice at both poles, north and south—all extremes are the same—misery belongs to the highest and the lowest only,—to the emperor and

* " As much company," says Pope, " as I have kept, and as much as I love it, I love reading better, and would rather be employed in reading than in the most agreeable conversation."

the beggar, when unsixpenced and unthroned. There is, to be sure, a damned insipid medium — an equinoctial line — no one knows where, except upon maps and measurement.

> " ' And all our *yesterdays* have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death.'

I will keep no further journal of that same hesternal torch-light; and, to prevent me from returning, like a dog, to the vomit of memory, I tear out the remaining leaves of this volume, and write, in *Ipecacuanha*, — ' that the Bourbons are restored ! ! ! ' — ' Hang up philosophy.' To be sure, I have long despised myself and man, but I never spat in the face of my species before — ' O fool ! I shall go mad.' "

The perusal of this singular Journal having made the reader acquainted with the chief occurrences that marked the present period of his history — the publication of The Corsair, the attacks upon him in the newspapers, &c. — there only remains for me to add his correspondence at the same period, by which the moods and movements of his mind, during these events, will be still further illustrated.

TO MR. MURRAY.

" Sunday, Jan. 2. 1814.

" Excuse this dirty paper — it is the *pen*ultimate half-sheet of a quire. Thanks for your book and the Ln. Chron., which I return. The Corsair is copied, and now at Lord Holland's; but I wish Mr. Gifford to have it to-night.

"Mr. Dallas is very *perverse;* so that I have offended both him and you, when I really meaned to do good, at least to one, and certainly not to annoy either. *

* He had made a present of the copyright of "The Corsair" to Mr. Dallas, who thus describes the manner in which the gift was bestowed: — "On the 28th of December, I called in the morning on Lord Byron, whom I found composing 'The Corsair.' He had been working upon it but a few days, and he read me the portion he had written. After some observations, he said, 'I have a great mind — I will.' He then added that he should finish it soon, and asked me to accept of the copyright. I was much surprised. He had, before he was aware of the value of his works, declared that he never would take money for them, and that I should have the whole advantage of all he wrote. This declaration became morally void when the question was about thousands, instead of a few hundreds; and I perfectly agree with the admired and admirable author of Waverley, that 'the wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood, and which may be after repented of.' — I felt this on the sale of 'Childe Harold,' and observed it to him. The copyright of 'The Giaour' and 'The Bride of Abydos' remained undisposed of, though the poems were selling rapidly, nor had I the slightest notion that he would ever again give me a copyright. But as he continued in the resolution of not appropriating the sale of his works to his own use, I did not scruple to accept that of 'The Corsair,' and I thanked him. He asked me to call and hear the portions read as he wrote them. I went every morning, and was astonished at the rapidity of his composition. He gave me the poem complete on New-year's day, 1814, saying, that my acceptance of it gave him great pleasure, and that I was fully at liberty to publish it with any bookseller I pleased, independent of the profit."

Out of this last-mentioned permission arose the momentary embarrassment between the noble poet and his publisher, to which the above notes allude.

But I shall manage him, I hope. — I am pretty confident of the *Tale* itself; but one cannot be sure. If I get it from Lord Holland, it shall be sent.

" Yours," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

[" Jan. 1814.]

" I will answer your letter this evening; in the mean time, it may be sufficient to say, that there was no intention on my part to annoy you, but merely to *serve* Dallas, and also to rescue myself from a possible imputation that *I* had other objects than fame in writing so frequently. Whenever I avail myself of any profit arising from my pen, depend upon it, it is not for my own convenience; at least it never has been so, and I hope never will.

" P. S. I shall answer this evening, and will set all right about Dallas. I thank you for your expressions of personal regard, which I can assure you I do not lightly value."

Letter 155. TO MR. MOORE.

" January 6. 1814.

" I have got a devil of a long story in the press, entitled ' The Corsair,' in the regular heroic measure. It is a pirate's isle, peopled with my own creatures, and you may easily suppose they do a world of mischief through the three cantos. Now for your dedication — if you will accept it. This is positively my last experiment on public *literary* opinion, till I turn my thirtieth year, — if so be I flourish

until that downhill period. I have a confidence for you — a perplexing one to me, and, just at present, in a state of abeyance in itself.

" However, we shall see. In the mean time, you may amuse yourself with my suspense, and put all the justices of peace in requisition, in case I come into your county with ' hackbut bent.'

" Seriously, whether I am to hear from her or him, it is a *pause*, which I shall fill up with as few thoughts of my own as I can borrow from other people. Any thing is better than stagnation; and now, in the interregnum of my autumn and a strange summer adventure, which I don't like to think of, (I don't mean * * 's, however, which is laughable only,) the antithetical state of my lucubrations makes me alive, and Macbeth can ' sleep no more :' — he was lucky in getting rid of the drowsy sensation of waking again.

" Pray write to me. I must send you a copy of the letter of dedication. When do you come out? I am sure we don't *clash* this time, for I am all at sea, and in action, — and a wife, and a mistress, &c.

" Thomas, thou art a happy fellow; but if you wish us to be so, you must come up to town, as you did last year: and we shall have a world to say, and to see, and to hear. Let me hear from you.

" P. S. Of course you will keep my secret, and don't even talk in your sleep of it. Happen what may, your dedication is ensured, being already written; and I shall copy it out fair to-night, in case business or amusement — *Amant alterna Camœnæ.*"

TO MR. MURRAY.

" Jan. 7. 1814.

" You don't like the dedication — very well; there is another: but you will send the other to Mr. Moore, that he may know I *had* written it. I send also mottoes for the cantos. I think you will allow that an elephant may be more sagacious, but cannot be more docile.

" Yours, Bn.

" The *name* is again altered to *Medora*." *

Letter 156. TO MR. MOORE.

" January 8. 1814.

" As it would not be fair to press you into a dedication, without previous notice, I send you *two*, and I will tell you *why two*. The first, Mr. M., who sometimes takes upon him the critic (and I bear it from *astonishment*), says, may do you *harm* — God forbid! — this alone makes me listen to him. The fact is, he is a damned Tory, and has, I dare swear, something of *self*, which I cannot divine, at the bottom of his objection, as it is the allusion to Ireland to which he objects. But he be d—d — though a good fellow enough (your sinner would not be worth a d—n).

" Take your choice; — no one, save he and Mr. Dallas, has seen either, and D. is quite on my side,

* It had been at first Genevra, — not Francesca, as Mr. Dallas asserts.

and for the first.* If I can but testify to you and the world how truly I admire and esteem you, I shall be quite satisfied. As to *prose*, I don't know Addison's from Johnson's; but I will try to mend my cacology. Pray perpend, pronounce, and don't be offended with either.

"My last epistle would probably put you in a fidget. But the devil, who *ought* to be civil on such occasions, proved so, and took my letter to the right place.

"Is it not odd? — the very fate I said she had escaped from * *, she has now undergone from the worthy * *. Like Mr. Fitzgerald, shall I not lay claim to the character of 'Vates?' — as he did in the Morning Herald for prophesying the fall of

* The first was, of course, the one that I preferred. The other ran as follows: —

"My dear Moore, January 7. 1814.

"I had written to you a long letter of dedication, which I suppress, because, though it contained something relating to you which every one had been glad to hear, yet there was too much about politics, and poesy, and all things whatsoever, ending with that topic on which most men are fluent, and none very amusing — *one's self*. It might have been re-written — but to what purpose? My praise could add nothing to your well-earned and firmly-established fame; and with my most hearty admiration of your talents, and delight in your conversation, you are already acquainted. In availing myself of your friendly permission to inscribe this poem to you, I can only wish the offering were as worthy your acceptance as your regard is dear to,

"Yours, most affectionately and faithfully,

"Byron."

Buonaparte, — who, by the by, I don't think is yet fallen. I wish he would rally and route your legitimate sovereigns, having a mortal hate to all royal entails. — But I am scrawling a treatise. Good night. Ever," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

" January 11. 1814.

" Correct this proof by Mr. Gifford's (and from the MSS.), particularly as to the *pointing*. I have added a section for *Gulnare*, to fill up the parting, and dismiss her more ceremoniously. If Mr. Gifford or you dislike, 'tis but a *sponge* and another midnight better employed than in yawning over Miss * *; who, by the by, may soon return the compliment.

" Wednesday or Thursday.

" P. S. I have redde * *. It is full of praises of Lord Ellenborough ! ! ! (from which I infer near and dear relations at the bar), and * * * *.

" I do not love Madame de Staël; but, depend upon it, she beats all your natives hollow as an authoress, in my opinion; and I would not say this if I could help it.

" P. S. Pray report my best acknowledgments to Mr. Gifford in any words that may best express how truly his kindness obliges me. I won't bore him with *lip* thanks or *notes*."

TO MR. MOORE.

" January 13. 1814.

" I have but a moment to write, but all is as it should be. I have said really far short of my opinion, but if you think enough, I am content. Will you return the proof by the post, as I leave town on Sunday, and have no other corrected copy. I put 'servant,' as being less familiar before the public; because I don't like presuming upon our friendship to infringe upon forms. As to the other *word*, you may be sure it is one I cannot hear or repeat too often.

" I write in an agony of haste and confusion. — Perdonate."

LETTER 157. TO MR. MURRAY.

" January 15. 1814.

" Before any proof goes to Mr. Gifford, it may be as well to revise this, where there are *words omitted*, faults committed, and the devil knows what. As to the dedication, I cut out the parenthesis of *Mr.**, but not another word shall move unless for a better. Mr. Moore has seen, and decidedly preferred the part your Tory bile sickens at. If every syllable were a rattle-snake, or every letter a pestilence, they should not be expunged. Let those who cannot swallow chew the expressions on Ireland; or should even Mr. Croker array himself in all his terrors

* He had at first, after the words " Scott alone," inserted, in a parenthesis, — " He will excuse the *Mr.* — ' we do not say *Mr.* Cæsar.' "

against them, I care for none of you, except Gifford; and he won't abuse me, except I deserve it — which will at least reconcile me to his justice. As to the poems in Hobhouse's volume, the translation from the Romaic is well enough; but the best of the other volume (of *mine*, I mean) have been already printed. But do as you please — only, as I shall be absent when you come out, *do*, *pray*, let Mr. *Dallas* and *you* have a care of the *press*. Yours," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

["1814. January 16.]

"I do believe that the devil never created or perverted such a fiend as the fool of a printer.* I am obliged to enclose you, *luckily* for me, this *second* proof, *corrected*, because there is an ingenuity in his blunders peculiar to himself. Let the press be guided by the present sheet. Yours, &c.

"*Burn the other.*

"Correct *this also* by the other in some things which I may have forgotten. There is one mistake he made, which, if it had stood, I would most certainly have broken his neck."

* The amusing rages into which he was thrown by the printer were vented not only in these notes, but frequently on the proof-sheets themselves. Thus, a passage in the dedication having been printed "the first of her bands in estimation," he writes in the margin, "*bards*, not *bands* — was there ever such a stupid misprint?" and, in correcting a line that had been curtailed of its due number of syllables, he says, "*Do not* omit words — it is quite enough to alter or mis-spell them."

LETTER 158. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, January 22. 1814.

"You will be glad to hear of my safe arrival here. The time of my return will depend upon the weather, which is so impracticable, that this letter has to advance through more snows than ever opposed the Emperor's retreat. The roads are impassable, and return impossible for the present; which I do not regret, as I am much at my ease, and *six-and-twenty* complete this day — a very pretty age, if it would always last. Our coals are excellent, our fire-places large, my cellar full, and my head empty; and I have not yet recovered my joy at leaving London. If any unexpected turn occurred with my purchasers, I believe I should hardly quit the place at all; but shut my door, and let my beard grow.

"I forgot to mention (and I hope it is unnecessary) that the lines beginning — *Remember him*, &c. must *not* appear with *The Corsair*. You may slip them in with the smaller pieces newly annexed to *Childe Harold;* but on *no* account permit them to be appended to The Corsair. Have the goodness to recollect this particularly.

"The books I have brought with me are a great consolation for the confinement, and I bought more as we came along. In short, I never consult the thermometer, and shall not put up prayers for a *thaw*, unless I thought it would sweep away the rascally invaders of France. Was ever such a thing as Blucher's proclamation?

"Just before I left town, Kemble paid me the compliment of desiring me to write a *tragedy;* I wish

I could, but I find my scribbling mood subsiding — not before it was time ; but it is lucky to check it at all. If I lengthen my letter, you will think it is coming on again ; so, good-by. Yours alway,

" B.

" P. S. If you hear any news of battle or retreat on the part of the Allies (as they call them), pray send it. He has my best wishes to manure the fields of France with an *invading* army. I hate invaders of all countries, and have no patience with the cowardly cry of exultation over him, at whose name you all turned whiter than the snow to which you are indebted for your triumphs.

" I open my letter to thank you for yours just received. The ' Lines to a Lady Weeping ' must go with The Corsair. I care nothing for consequence, on this point. My politics are to me like a young mistress to an old man — the worse they grow, the fonder I become of them. As Mr. Gifford likes the ' Portuguese Translation*,' pray insert it as an addition to The Corsair.

" In all points of difference between Mr. Gifford and Mr. Dallas, let the first keep his place ; and in all points of difference between Mr. Gifford and Mr.

* His translation of the pretty Portuguese song, " Tu mi chamas." He was tempted to try another version of this ingenious thought, which is, perhaps, still more happy, and has never, I believe, appeared in print.

" You call me still your *life* — ah ! change the word —
Life is as transient as th' inconstant's sigh ;
Say rather I'm your *soul*, more just that name,
For, like the soul, my love can never die."

Anybody-else, I shall abide by the former; if I am wrong, I can't help it. But I would rather not be right with any other person. So there is an end of that matter. After all the trouble he has taken about me and mine, I should be very ungrateful to feel or act otherwise. Besides, in point of judgment, he is not to be lowered by a comparison. In *politics*, he may be right too; but that with me is a *feeling*, and I can't *torify* my nature."

LETTER 159. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, February 4. 1814.

"I need not say that your obliging letter was very welcome, and not the less so for being unexpected.

"It doubtless gratifies me much that our *finale* has pleased, and that the curtain drops gracefully.* *You* deserve it should, for your promptitude and good nature in arranging immediately with Mr. Dallas; and I can assure you that I esteem your entering so warmly into the subject, and writing to me so soon upon it, as a personal obligation. We shall now part, I hope, satisfied with each other. I *was* and *am* quite in earnest in my prefatory promise not to intrude any more; and this not from any affectation, but a thorough conviction that it is the best policy, and is at least respectful to my readers, as it shows that I would not willingly run the risk of forfeiting

* It will be recollected that he had announced The Corsair as "the last production with which he should trespass on public patience for some years."

their favour in future. Besides, I have other views and objects, and think that I shall keep this resolution; for, since I left London, though shut up, *snow*-bound, *thaw*-bound, and tempted with all kinds of paper, the dirtiest of ink, and the bluntest of pens, I have not even been haunted by a wish to put them to their combined uses, except in letters of business. My rhyming propensity is quite gone, and I feel much as I did at Patras on recovering from my fever — weak, but in health, and only afraid of a relapse. I do most fervently hope I never shall.

"I see by the Morning Chronicle there hath been discussion in the *Courier;* and I read in the Morning Post a wrathful letter about Mr. Moore, in which some Protestant Reader has made a sad confusion about *India* and Ireland.

"You are to do as you please about the smaller poems; but I think removing them *now* from The Corsair looks like *fear;* and if so, you must allow me not to be pleased. I should also suppose that, after the *fuss* of these newspaper esquires, they would materially assist the circulation of The Corsair; an object I should imagine at *present* of more importance to *yourself* than Childe Harold's seventh appearance. Do as you like; but don't allow the withdrawing that *poem* to draw any imputation of *dismay* upon me.

"Pray make my respects to Mr. Ward, whose praise I value most highly, as you well know; it is in the approbation of such men that fame becomes worth having. To Mr. Gifford I am always grate-

ful, and surely not less so now than ever. And so good night to my authorship.

"I have been sauntering and dozing here very quietly, and not unhappily. You will be happy to hear that I have completely established my title-deeds as marketable, and that the purchaser has succumbed to the terms, and fulfils them, or is to fulfil them forthwith. He is now here, and we go on very amicably together, — one in each *wing* of the Abbey. We set off on Sunday — I for town, he for Cheshire.

"Mrs. Leigh is with me — much pleased with the place, and less so with me for parting with it, to which not even the price can reconcile her. Your parcel has not yet arrived — at least the *Mags.* &c.; but I have received Childe Harold and The Corsair.

"I believe both are very correctly printed, which is a great satisfaction.

"I thank you for wishing me in town; but I think one's success is most felt at a distance, and I enjoy my solitary self-importance in an agreeable sulky way of my own, upon the strength of your letter — for which I once more thank you, and am, very truly, &c.

"P. S. Don't you think Buonaparte's next *publication* will be rather expensive to the Allies? Perry's Paris letter of yesterday looks very reviving. What a Hydra and Briareus it is! I wish they would pacify: there is no end to this campaigning."

LETTER 160. TO MR. MURRAY.

" Newstead Abbey, February 5. 1814.

" I quite forgot, in my answer of yesterday, to mention that I have no means of ascertaining whether the Newark *Pirate* has been doing what you say.* If so, he is a rascal, and a *shabby* rascal too; and if his offence is punishable by law or pugilism, he shall be fined or buffeted. Do you try and discover, and I will make some enquiry here. Perhaps some *other* in town may have gone on printing, and used the same deception.

"The *fac-simile* is omitted in Childe Harold, which is very awkward, as there is a *note* expressly on the subject. Pray *replace* it as *usual*.

" On second and third thoughts, the withdrawing the small poems from The Corsair (even to add to Childe Harold) looks like shrinking and shuffling after the fuss made upon one of them by the Tories. Pray replace them in The Corsair's appendix. I am sorry that Childe Harold requires some and such abetments to make him move off; but, if you remember, I told you his popularity would not be permanent. It is very lucky for the author that he had made up his mind to a temporary reputation in time. The truth is, I do not think that any of the present day (and least of all, one who has not consulted the flattering side of human nature,) have much to hope from posterity; and you may think it affectation very probably, but, to me, my present and past success has appeared very singular, since it was in the

* Reprinting the " Hours of Idleness."

teeth of so many prejudices. I almost think people like to be contradicted. If Childe Harold flags, it will hardly be worth while to go on with the engravings: but do as you please; I have done with the whole concern; and the enclosed lines, written years ago, and copied from my skull-cap, are among the last with which you will be troubled. If you like, add them to Childe Harold, if only for the sake of another outcry. You received so long an answer yesterday, that I will not intrude on you further than to repeat myself,

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. Of course, in reprinting (if you have occasion), you will take great care to be correct. The present editions seem very much so, except in the last note of Childe Harold, where the word *responsible* occurs twice nearly together; correct the second into *answerable*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newark, February 6. 1814.

"I am thus far on my way to town. Master Ridge* I have seen, and he owns to having *reprinted* some *sheets*, to make up a few complete remaining copies! I have now given him fair warning, and if he plays such tricks again, I must either get an injunction, or call for an account of profits (as I never have parted with the copyright), or, in short, any thing vexatious, to repay him in his own way. If the weather does not relapse, I hope to be in town in a day or two. Yours," &c.

* The printer at Newark.

TO MR. MURRAY.

" February 7. 1814.

" I see all the papers in a sad commotion with those eight lines; and the Morning Post, in particular, has found out that I am a sort of Richard III.— deformed in mind and *body*. The *last* piece of information is not very new to a man who passed five years at a public school.

" I am very sorry you cut out those lines for Childe Harold. Pray re-insert them in their old place in 'The Corsair.' "

LETTER 161. TO MR. HODGSON.

" February 28. 1814.

" There is a youngster, and a clever one, named Reynolds, who has just published a poem called 'Safie,' published by Cawthorne. He is in the most natural and fearful apprehension of the Reviewers; and as you and I both know by experience the effect of such things upon a *young* mind, I wish *you* would take his production into dissection, and do it *gently*. *I* cannot, because it is inscribed to me; but I assure you this is not my motive for wishing him to be tenderly entreated, but because I know the misery at his time of life, of untoward remarks upon first appearance.

" Now for *self*. Pray thank your *cousin* — it is just as it should be, to my liking, and probably *more* than will suit any one else's. I hope and trust that you are well and well doing. Peace be with you. Ever yours, my dear friend."

LETTER 162. TO MR. MOORE.

" February 10. 1814.

" I arrived in town late yesterday evening, having been absent three weeks, which I passed in Notts. quietly and pleasantly. You can have no conception of the uproar the eight lines on the little Royalty's weeping in 1812 (now republished) have occasioned. The R * *, who had always thought them *yours*, chose — God knows why — on discovering them to be mine, to be *affected* 'in sorrow rather than anger.' The Morning Post, Sun, Herald, Courier, have all been in hysterics ever since. M. is in a fright, and wanted to shuffle; and the abuse against me in all directions is vehement, unceasing, loud — some of it good, and all of it hearty. I feel a little compunctious as to the R * * 's *regret;* —' would he had been only angry! but I fear him not.'

" Some of these same assailments you have probably seen. My person (which is excellent for 'the nonce') has been denounced in verses, the more like the subject, inasmuch as they halt exceedingly. Then, in another, I am an *atheist*, a *rebel*, and, at last, the *devil* (*boiteux*, I presume). My demonism seems to be a female's conjecture; if so, perhaps, I could convince her that I am but a mere mortal, — if a queen of the Amazons may be believed, who says αριστον χωλος οιφει. I quote from memory, so my Greek is probably deficient; but the passage is *meant* to mean * *.

" Seriously, I am in, what the learned call, a dilemma, and the vulgar, a scrape; and my friends desire me not to be in a passion; and, like Sir Fret-

ful, I assure them that I am 'quite calm,' — but I am nevertheless in a fury.

"Since I wrote thus far, a friend has come in, and we have been talking and buffooning till I have quite lost the thread of my thoughts; and, as I won't send them unstrung to you, good morning, and

"Believe me ever, &c.

"P. S. Murray, during my absence, *omitted* the Tears in several of the copies. I have made him replace them, and am very wroth with his qualms; — 'as the wine is poured out, let it be drunk to the dregs.'"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 10. 1814.

"I am much better, and indeed quite well, this morning. I have received *two*, but I presume there are more of the *Ana*, subsequently, and also something previous, to which the Morning Chronicle replied. You also mentioned a parody on the *Skull*. I wish to see them all, because there may be things that require notice either by pen or person.

"Yours, &c.

"You need not trouble yourself to answer this; but send me the things when you get them."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 12. 1814.

"If you have copies of the 'Intercepted Letters,' Lady Holland would be glad of a volume; and

when you have served others, have the goodness to think of your humble servant.

"You have played the devil by that injudicious *suppression*, which you did totally without my consent. Some of the papers have exactly said what might be expected. Now I *do* not, and *will* not be supposed to shrink, although myself and every thing belonging to me were to perish with my memory. Yours, &c. Bn.

"P. S. Pray attend to what I stated yesterday on *technical* topics."

Letter 163. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Monday, February 14. 1814.

"Before I left town yesterday, I wrote you a note, which I presume you received. I have heard so many different accounts of *your* proceedings, or rather of those of others towards *you*, in consequence of the publication of these everlasting lines, that I am anxious to hear from yourself the real state of the case. Whatever responsibility, obloquy, or effect is to arise from the publication, should surely *not* fall upon you in any degree; and I can have no objection to your stating, as distinctly and publicly as you please, *your* unwillingness to publish them, and my own obstinacy upon the subject. Take any course you please to vindicate *yourself*, but leave me to fight my own way; and, as I before said, do not *compromise* me by any thing which may look like *shrinking* on *my* part; as for your own, make the best of it. Yours, Bn."

LETTER 164. TO MR. ROGERS.

" February 16. 1814.

" My dear Rogers,

" I wrote to Lord Holland briefly, but I hope distinctly, on the subject which has lately occupied much of my conversation with him and you.* As things now stand, upon that topic my determination must be unalterable.

" I declare to you most sincerely that there is no human being on whose regard and esteem I set a higher value than on Lord Holland's; and, as far as concerns himself, I would concede even to humiliation, without any view to the future, and solely from my sense of his conduct as to the past. For the rest, I conceive that I have already done all in my power by the suppression.† If that is not enough, they must act as they please; but I will not 'teach my tongue a most inherent baseness,' come what may. You will probably be at the Marquis Lansdowne's to-night. I am asked, but I am not sure that I shall be able to go. Hobhouse will be there. I think, if you knew him well, you would like him.

" Believe me always yours very affectionately,

" B."

LETTER 165. TO MR. ROGERS.

" February 16. 1814.

" If Lord Holland is satisfied, as far as regards himself and Lady Hd., and as this letter expresses him to be, it is enough.

* Relative to a proposed reconciliation between Lord Carlisle and himself.

† Of the Satire.

" As for any impression the public may receive from the revival of the lines on Lord Carlisle, let them keep it, — the more favourable for him, and the worse for me, — better for all.

" All the sayings and doings in the world shall not make me utter another word of conciliation to any thing that breathes. I shall bear what I can, and what I cannot I shall resist. The worst they could do would be to exclude me from society. I have never courted it, nor, I may add, in the general sense of the word, enjoyed it — and ' there is a world elsewhere ! '

" Any thing remarkably injurious, I have the same means of repaying as other men, with such interest as circumstances may annex to it.

" Nothing but the necessity of adhering to regimen prevents me from dining with you to-morrow.

" I am yours most truly,

" Bn."

Letter 166. TO MR. MOORE.

" February 16. 1814.

" You may be assured that the only prickles that sting from the Royal hedgehog are those which possess a torpedo property, and may benumb some of my friends. *I* am quite silent, and ' hush'd in grim repose.' The frequency of the assaults has weakened their effects, — if ever they had any ; — and, if they had had much, I should hardly have held my tongue, or withheld my fingers. It is something quite new to attack a man for abandoning his resentments. I have heard that previous praise and

subsequent vituperation were rather ungrateful, but I did not know that it was wrong to endeavour to do justice to those who did not wait till I had made some amends for former and boyish prejudices, but received me into their friendship, when I might still have been their enemy.

" You perceive justly that I must *intentionally* have made my fortune like Sir Francis Wronghead. It were better if there were more merit in my independence, but it really is something nowadays to be independent at all, and the *less* temptation to be otherwise, the more uncommon the case, in these times of paradoxical servility. I believe that most of our hates and likings have been hitherto nearly the same; but from henceforth they must, of necessity, be one and indivisible, — and now for it! I am for any weapon, — the pen, till one can find something sharper, will do for a beginning.

" You can have no conception of the ludicrous solemnity with which these two stanzas have been treated. The Morning Post gave notice of an intended motion in the House of my brethren on the subject, and God he knows what proceedings besides; — and all this, as Bedreddin in the ' Nights ' says, ' for making a cream tart without pepper.' This last piece of intelligence is, I presume, too laughable to be true; and the destruction of the Custom-house appears to have, in some degree, interfered with mine; added to which, the last battle of Buonaparte has usurped the column hitherto devoted to my bulletin.

" I send you from this day's Morning Post the

best which have hitherto appeared on this 'impudent doggerel,' as the Courier calls it. There was another about my *diet*, when a boy — not at all bad — some time ago; but the rest are but indifferent.

"I shall think about your *oratorical* hint*;—but I have never set much upon 'that cast,' and am grown as tired as Solomon of every thing, and of myself more than any thing. This is being what the learned call philosophical, and the vulgar lack-a-daisical. I am, however, always glad of a blessing†; pray, repeat yours soon, — at least your letter, and I shall think the benediction included.

"Ever," &c.

LETTER 167. TO MR. DALLAS.

"February 17. 1814.

"The Courier of this evening accuses me of having 'received and pocketed' large sums for my works. I have never yet received, nor wish to receive, a farthing for any. Mr. Murray offered a thousand for The Giaour and Bride of Abydos, which I said was too much, and that if he could afford it at the end of six months, I would then direct how it might be disposed of; but neither then, nor at any other period, have I ever availed myself of the profits on my own account. For the republication of the Satire I

* I had endeavoured to persuade him to take a part in parliamentary affairs, and to exercise his talent for oratory more frequently.

† In concluding my letter, having said "God bless you!" I added — "that is, if you have no objection."

refused four hundred guineas; and for the previous editions I never asked nor received a *sous*, nor for any writing whatever. I do not wish you to do any thing disagreeable to yourself; there never was nor shall be any conditions nor stipulations with regard to any accommodation that I could afford you; and, on your part, I can see nothing derogatory in receiving the copyright. It was only assistance afforded to a worthy man, by one not quite so worthy.

"Mr. Murray is going to contradict this *; but your *name* will not be mentioned: for your own part, you are a free agent, and are to do as you please. I only hope that now, as always, you will think that I wish to take no unfair advantage of the accidental opportunity which circumstances permitted me of being of use to you. Ever," &c.

In consequence of this letter, Mr. Dallas addressed an explanation to one of the newspapers, of which the following is a part;—the remainder being occupied with a rather clumsily managed defence of his noble benefactor on the subject of the Stanzas.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING POST.

"Sir,

"I have seen the paragraph in an evening paper, in which Lord Byron is *accused* of 'receiving and pocketing' large sums for his works. I believe no one who knows him has the slightest suspicion of this kind; but the assertion being public, I think it a

* The statement of the Courier, &c.

justice I owe to Lord Byron to contradict it publicly. I address this letter to you for that purpose, and I am happy that it gives me an opportunity at this moment to make some observations which I have for several days been anxious to do publicly, but from which I have been restrained by an apprehension that I should be suspected of being prompted by his Lordship.

"I take upon me to affirm, that Lord Byron never received a shilling for any of his works. To my certain knowledge, the profits of the Satire were left entirely to the publisher of it. The gift of the copyright of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage I have already publicly acknowledged in the dedication of the new edition of my novels; and I now add my acknowledgment for that of The Corsair, not only for the profitable part of it, but for the delicate and delightful manner of bestowing it while yet unpublished. With respect to his two other poems, The Giaour and The Bride of Abydos, Mr. Murray, the publisher of them, can truly attest that no part of the sale of them has ever touched his hands, or been disposed of for his use. Having said thus much as to facts, I cannot but express my surprise that it should ever be deemed a matter of reproach that he should appropriate the pecuniary returns of his works. Neither rank nor fortune seems to me to place any man above this; for what difference does it make in honour and noble feelings, whether a copyright be bestowed, or its value employed, in beneficent purposes? I differ with my Lord Byron on this subject as well as some others; and he has

constantly, both by word and action, shown his aversion to receiving money for his productions."

LETTER 168. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 26. 1814.

"Dallas had, perhaps, have better kept silence;—but that was *his* concern, and, as his facts are correct, and his motive not dishonourable to himself, I wished him well through it. As for his interpretations of the lines, he and any one else may interpret them as they please. I have and shall adhere to my taciturnity, unless something very particular occurs to render this impossible. Do *not you* say a word. If any one is to speak, it is the person principally concerned. The most amusing thing is, that every one (to me) attributes the abuse to the *man they personally most dislike!* — some say C * * r, some C * * e, others F * * d, &c. &c. &c. I do not know, and have no clue but conjecture. If discovered, and he turns out a hireling, he must be left to his wages; if a cavalier, he must 'wink, and hold out his iron.'

"I had some thoughts of putting the question to C * * r, but H., who, I am sure, would not dissuade me if it were right, advised me by all means *not;* — 'that I had no right to take it upon suspicion,' &c. &c. Whether H. is correct I am not aware, but he believes himself so, and says there can be but one opinion on that subject. This I am, at least, sure of, that he would never prevent me from doing what he deemed the duty of a *preux* chevalier. In such cases — at least, in this country — we must act ac-

cording to usages. In considering this instance, I dismiss my own personal feelings. Any man will and must fight, when necessary, — even without a motive. *Here*, I should take it up really without much resentment; for, unless a woman one likes is in the way, it is some years since I felt a *long* anger. But, undoubtedly, could I, or may I, trace it to a man of station, I should and shall do what is proper.

" * * was angerly, but tried to conceal it. *You* are not called upon to avow the ' Twopenny,' and would only gratify them by so doing. Do you not see the great object of all these fooleries is to set him, and you, and me, and all persons whatsoever, by the ears? — more especially those who are on good terms, — and nearly succeeded. Lord H. wished me to *concede* to Lord Carlisle — concede to the devil! — to a man who used me ill? I told him, in answer, that I would neither concede, nor recede on the subject, but be silent altogether; unless any thing more could be said about Lady H. and himself, who had been since my very good friends; — and there it ended. This was no time for concessions to Lord C.

" I have been interrupted, but shall write again soon. Believe me ever, my dear Moore," &c.

Another of his friends having expressed, soon after, some intention of volunteering publicly in his defence, he lost no time in repressing him by the following sensible letter: —

LETTER 169. TO W * * W * *, ESQ.

" February 28. 1814.

" My dear W.,

" I have but a few moments to write to you. *Silence* is the only answer to the things you mention; nor should I regard that man as my friend who said a word more on the subject. I care little for attacks, but I will not submit to *defences;* and I do hope and trust that *you* have never entertained a serious thought of engaging in so foolish a controversy. Dallas's letter was, to his credit, merely as to facts which he had a right to state; *I* neither have nor shall take the least *public* notice, nor permit any one else to do so. If I discover the writer, then I may act in a different manner; but it will not be in writing.

" An expression in your letter has induced me to write this to you, to entreat you not to interfere in any way in such a business, — it is now nearly over, and depend upon it *they* are much more chagrined by my silence than they could be by the best defence in the world. I do not know any thing that would vex me more than any further reply to these things.

" Ever yours, in haste,

" B."

LETTER 170. TO MR. MOORE.

" March 3. 1814.

" My dear Friend,

" I have a great mind to tell you that I *am* 'uncomfortable,' if only to make you come to town; where no one ever more delighted in seeing you, nor

is there any one to whom I would sooner turn for consolation in my most vapourish moments. The truth is, I have 'no lack of argument' to ponder upon of the most gloomy description, but this arises from *other* causes. Some day or other, when we are *veterans*, I may tell you a tale of present and past times; and it is not from want of confidence that I do not now, — but — but — always a *but* to the end of the chapter.

"There is nothing, however, upon the *spot* either to love or hate; — but I certainly have subjects for both at no very great distance, and am besides embarrassed between *three* whom I know, and one (whose name, at least,) I do not know. All this would be very well if I had no heart; but, unluckily, I have found that there is such a thing still about me, though in no very good repair, and, also, that it has a habit of attaching itself to *one* whether I will or no. 'Divide et impera,' I begin to think, will only do for politics.

"If I discover the 'toad' as you call him, I shall 'tread,' — and put spikes in my shoes to do it more effectually. The effect of all these fine things I do not enquire much nor perceive. I believe * * felt them more than either of us. People are civil enough, and I have had no dearth of invitations, — none of which, however, I have accepted. I went out very little last year, and mean to go about still less. I have no passion for circles, and have long regretted that I ever gave way to what is called a town life; — which, of all the lives I ever saw (and they

are nearly as many as Plutarch's), seems to me to leave the least for the past and future.

" How proceeds the poem? Do not neglect it, and I have no fears. I need not say to you that your fame is dear to me, — I really might say *dearer* than my own; for I have lately begun to think my things have been strangely over-rated; and, at any rate, whether or not, I have done with them for ever. I may say to you what I would not say to every body, that the last two were written, The Bride in four, and The Corsair in ten days*, — which I take to be a most humiliating confession, as it proves my own want of judgment in publishing, and the public's in reading things, which cannot have stamina for permanent attention. ' So much for Buckingham.'

" I have no dread of your being too hasty, and I have still less of your failing. But I think a *year* a very fair allotment of time to a composition which is

* In asserting that he devoted but four days to the composition of The Bride, he must be understood to refer only to the first sketch of that poem, — the successive additions by which it was increased to its present length having occupied, as we have seen, a much longer period. The Corsair, on the contrary, was, from beginning to end, struck off at a heat — there being but little alteration or addition afterwards, — and the rapidity with which it was produced (being at the rate of nearly two hundred lines a day) would be altogether incredible, had we not his own, as well as his publisher's, testimony to the fact. Such an achievement, — taking into account the surpassing beauty of the work, — is, perhaps, wholly without a parallel in the history of Genius, and shows that ' écrire *par passion*,' as Rousseau expresses it, may be sometimes a shorter road to perfection than any that Art has ever struck out.

not to be Epic; and even Horace's 'Nonum prematur' must have been intended for the Millennium, or some longer-lived generation than ours. I wonder how much we should have had of *him*, had he observed his own doctrines to the letter. Peace be with you! Remember that I am always and most truly yours, &c.

"P.S. I never heard the 'report' you mention, nor, I dare say, many others. But, in course, you, as well as others, have 'damned good-natured friends,' who do their duty in the usual way. One thing will make you laugh. * * * *"

LETTER 171. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 12. 1814.

"Guess darkly, and you will seldom err. At present, I shall say no more, and, perhaps — but no matter. I hope we shall some day meet, and whatever years may precede or succeed it, I shall mark it with the 'white stone' in my calendar. I am not sure that I shall not soon be in your neighbourhood again. If so, and I am alone (as will probably be the case), I shall invade and carry you off, and endeavour to atone for sorry fare by a sincere welcome. I don't know the person absent (barring 'the sect') I should be so glad to see again.

"I have nothing of the sort you mention but *the lines* (the Weepers), if you like to have them in the Bag. I wish to give them all possible circulation. The *Vault* reflection is downright actionable, and to print it would be peril to the publisher; but I think the Tears have a natural right to be bagged, and the

editor (whoever he may be) might supply a facetious note or not, as he pleased.

"I cannot conceive how the *Vault* * has got about, — but so it is. It is too *farouche;* but, truth to say, my satires are not very playful. I have the plan of an epistle in my head, *at* him and *to* him; and, if they are not a little quieter, I shall embody it. I should say little or nothing of *myself.* As to mirth and ridicule, that is out of my way; but I have a tolerable fund of sternness and contempt, and, with Juvenal before me, I shall perhaps read him a lecture he has not lately heard in the C——t. From particular circumstances, which came to my knowledge almost by accident, I could 'tell him what he is — I know him well.'

"I meant, my dear M., to write to you a long letter, but I am hurried, and time clips my inclination down to yours, &c.

"P. S. *Think again* before you *shelf* your poem. There is a youngster, (older than me, by the by, but a younger poet,) Mr. G. Knight, with a vol. of Eastern Tales, written since his return, — for he has been in the countries. He sent to me last summer, and I advised him to write one in *each measure*, without any intention, at that time, of doing the same thing. Since that, from a habit of writing in a fever, I have anticipated him in the variety of measures, but quite unintentionally. Of the stories, I know

* Those bitter and powerful lines which he wrote on the opening of the vault that contained the remains of Henry VIII. and Charles I.

nothing, not having seen them *; but *he* has some lady in a sack, too, like The Giaour : — he told me at the time.

" The best way to make the public ' forget' me is to remind them of yourself. You cannot suppose that *I* would ask you or advise you to publish, if I thought you would *fail*. I really have *no* literary envy ; and I do not believe a friend's success ever sat nearer another than yours do to my best wishes. It is for *elderly gentlemen* to ' bear no brother near,' and cannot become our disease for more years than we may perhaps number. I wish you to be out before Eastern subjects are again before the public."

LETTER 172. TO MR. MURRAY.

" March 12. 1814.

" I have not time to read the whole MS. †, but what I have seen seems very well written (both *prose* and *verse*), and, though I am and can be no judge (at least a *fair* one on this subject), containing nothing which you *ought* to hesitate publishing upon *my* account. If the author is not Dr. *Busby* himself, I think it a pity, on his *own* account, that he should

* He was not yet aware, it appears, that the anonymous manuscript sent to him by his publisher was from the pen of Mr. Knight.

† The manuscript of a long grave satire, entitled " Anti-Byron," which had been sent to Mr. Murray, and by him forwarded to Lord Byron, with a request — not meant, I believe, seriously — that he would give his opinion as to the propriety of publishing it.

dedicate it to his subscribers; nor can I perceive what Dr. Busby has to do with the matter except as a translator of Lucretius, for whose doctrines he is surely not responsible. I tell you openly, and really most sincerely, that, if published at all, there is no earthly reason why you should *not;* on the contrary, I should receive it as the greatest compliment *you* could pay to your good opinion of my candour, to print and circulate that or any other work, attacking me in a manly manner, and without any malicious intention, from which, as far as I have seen, I must exonerate this writer.

"He is wrong in one thing — *I* am no *atheist;* but if he thinks I have published principles tending to such opinions, he has a perfect right to controvert them. Pray publish it; I shall never forgive myself if I think that I have prevented you.

"Make my compliments to the author, and tell him I wish him success: his verse is very deserving of it; and I shall be the last person to suspect his motives. Yours, &c.

"P. S. If *you* do not publish it, some one else will. You cannot suppose me so narrow-minded as to shrink from discussion. I repeat once for all, that I think it a good poem (as far as I have redde); and that is the only point *you* should consider. How odd that *eight lines* should have given birth, I really think, to *eight thousand*, including *all* that has been said, and will be on the subject!"

LETTER 173. TO MR. MURRAY.

" April 9. 1814.

" All these news are very fine; but nevertheless I want my books, if you can find, or cause them to be found for me, — if only to lend them to Napoleon, in " the Island of Elba," during his retirement. I also (if convenient, and you have no party with you,) should be glad to speak with you, for a few minutes, this evening, as I have had a letter from Mr. Moore, and wish to ask you, as the best judge, of the best time for him to publish the work he has composed. I need not say, that I have his success much at heart; not only because he is my friend, but something much better — a man of great talent, of which he is less sensible than I believe any even of his enemies. If you can so far oblige me as to step down, do so; and if you are otherwise occupied, say nothing about it. I shall find you at home in the course of next week.

" P. S. I see Sotheby's Tragedies advertised. The Death of Darnley is a famous subject — one of the best, I should think, for the drama. Pray let me have a copy when ready.

" Mrs. Leigh was very much pleased with her books, and desired me to thank you; she means, I believe, to write to you her acknowledgments."

LETTER 174. TO MR. MOORE.

" 2. Albany, April 9. 1814.

" Viscount Althorp is about to be married, and I have gotten his spacious bachelor apartments in

Albany, to which you will, I hope, address a speedy answer to this mine epistle.

"I am but just returned to town, from which you may infer that I have been out of it; and I have been boxing, for exercise, with Jackson for this last month daily. I have also been drinking, and, on one occasion, with three other friends at the Cocoa Tree, from six till four, yea, unto five in the matin. We clareted and champagned till two — then supped, and finished with a kind of regency punch composed of madeira, brandy, and *green* tea, no *real* water being admitted therein. There was a night for you! without once quitting the table, except to ambulate home, which I did alone, and in utter contempt of a hackney-coach and my own *vis*, both of which were deemed necessary for our conveyance. And so, — I am very well, and they say it will hurt my constitution.

"I have also, more or less, been breaking a few of the favourite commandments; but I mean to pull up and marry, if any one will have me. In the mean time, the other day I nearly killed myself with a collar of brawn, which I swallowed for supper, and *in*digested for I don't know how long: but that is by the by. All this gourmandise was in honour of Lent; for I am forbidden meat all the rest of the year, but it is strictly enjoined me during your solemn fast. I have been, and am, in very tolerable love; but of that hereafter as it may be.

"My dear Moore, say what you will in your preface; and quiz any thing or any body, — me if you like it. Oons! dost thou think me of the *old*, or

rather *elderly*, school? If one can't jest with one's friends, with whom can we be facetious? You have nothing to fear from * *, whom I have not seen, being out of town when he called. He will be very correct, smooth, and all that, but I doubt whether there will be any 'grace beyond the reach of art;' — and, whether there is or not, how long will you be so d—d modest? As for Jeffrey, it is a very handsome thing of him to speak well of an old antagonist, — and what a mean mind dared not do. Any one will revoke praise; but — were it not partly my own case — I should say that very few have strength of mind to unsay their censure, or follow it up with praise of other things.

"What think you of the review of *Levis?* It beats the Bag and my hand-grenade hollow, as an invective, and hath thrown the Court into hysterics, as I hear from very good authority. Have you heard from * * *?

"No more rhyme for — or rather, *from* — me. I have taken my leave of that stage, and henceforth will mountebank it no longer. I have had my day, and there's an end. The utmost I expect, or even wish, is to have it said in the Biographia Britannica, that I might perhaps have been a poet, had I gone on and amended. My great comfort is, that the temporary celebrity I have wrung from the world has been in the very teeth of all opinions and prejudices. I have flattered no ruling powers; I have never concealed a single thought that tempted me. They can't say I have truckled to the times, nor to popular topics, (as Johnson, or somebody, said of

Cleveland,) and whatever I have gained has been at the expenditure of as much *personal* favour as possible; for I do believe never was a bard more unpopular, *quoad homo*, than myself. And now I have done; — 'ludite nunc alios.' Every body may be d—d, as they seem fond of it, and resolve to stickle lustily for endless brimstone.

"Oh — by the by, I had nearly forgot. There is a long poem, an 'Anti-Byron,' coming out, to prove that I have formed a conspiracy to overthrow, by *rhyme*, all religion and government, and have already made great progress! It is not very scurrilous, but serious and ethereal. I never felt myself important, till I saw and heard of my being such a little Voltaire as to induce such a production. Murray would not publish it, for which he was a fool, and so I told him; but some one else will, doubtless. 'Something too much of this.'

"Your French scheme is good, but let it be *Italian;* all the Angles will be at Paris. Let it be Rome, Milan, Naples, Florence, Turin, Venice, or Switzerland, and 'egad!' (as Bayes saith,) I will connubiate and join you; and we will write a new 'Inferno' in our Paradise. Pray think of this — and I will really buy a wife and a ring, and say the ceremony, and settle near you in a summer-house upon the Arno, or the Po, or the Adriatic.

"Ah! my poor little pagod, Napoleon, has walked off his pedestal. He has abdicated, they say. This would draw molten brass from the eyes of Zatanai. What! 'kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet, and then be baited by the rabble's curse!' I

cannot bear such a crouching catastrophe. I must stick to Sylla, for my modern favourites don't do, — their resignations are of a different kind. All health and prosperity, my dear Moore. Excuse this lengthy letter. Ever, &c.

"P. S. The Quarterly quotes you frequently in an article on America; and every body I know asks perpetually after you and yours. When will you answer them in person?"

He did not long persevere in his resolution against writing, as will be seen from the following notes to his publisher.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 10. 1814.

"I have written an Ode on the fall of Napoleon, which, if you like, I will copy out, and make you a present of. Mr. Merivale has seen part of it, and likes it. You may show it to Mr. Gifford, and print it, or not, as you please — it is of no consequence. It contains nothing in *his* favour, and no allusion whatever to our own government or the Bourbons. Yours, &c.

"P.S. It is in the measure of my stanzas at the end of Childe Harold, which were much liked, beginning 'And thou art dead,' &c. &c. There are ten stanzas of it — ninety lines in all."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 11. 1814.

"I enclose you a letter*et* from Mrs. Leigh.

"It will be best *not* to put my name to our *Ode;*

but you may *say* as openly as you like that it is mine, and I can inscribe it to Mr. Hobhouse, from the *author*, which will mark it sufficiently. After the resolution of not publishing, though it is a thing of little length and less consequence, it will be better altogether that it is anonymous; but we will incorporate it in the first *tome* of ours that you find time or the wish to publish. Yours alway, B.

"P. S. I hope you got a note of alterations, sent this matin?

"P. S. Oh my books! my books! will you never find my books?

"Alter '*potent* spell' to '*quickening* spell:' the first (as Polonius says) 'is a vile phrase,' and means nothing, besides being common-place and *Rosa-Matilda-ish*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 12. 1814.

"I send you a few notes and trifling alterations, and an additional motto from Gibbon, which you will find *singularly appropriate*. A 'Good-natured Friend' tells me there is a most scurrilous attack on *us* in the Anti-jacobin Review, which you have *not* sent. Send it, as I am in that state of languor which will derive benefit from getting into a passion. Ever," &c.

LETTER 175. TO MR. MOORE.

"Albany, April 20. 1814.

"I *am* very glad to hear that you are to be transient from Mayfield so very soon, and was taken in

by the first part of your letter.* Indeed, for aught I know, you may be treating me, as Slipslop says, with 'ironing' even now. I shall say nothing of the *shock*, which had nothing of *humeur* in it; as I am apt to take even a critic, and still more a friend, at his word, and never to doubt that I have been writing cursed nonsense, if they say so. There was a mental reservation in my pact with the public†, in behalf of *anonymes;* and, even had there not, the provocation was such as to make it physically impossible to pass over this damnable epoch of triumphant tameness. 'Tis a cursed business; and, after all, I shall think higher of rhyme and reason, and very humbly of your heroic people, till—Elba becomes a

* I had begun my letter in the following manner: — "Have you seen the 'Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte?'—I suspect it to be either F—g—d's or Rosa Matilda's. Those rapid and masterly portraits of all the tyrants that preceded Napoleon have a vigour in them which would incline me to say that Rosa Matilda is the person—but then, on the other hand, that powerful grasp of history," &c. &c. After a little more of this mock parallel, the letter went on thus: — "I should like to know what *you* think of the matter? — Some friends of mine here *will* insist that it is the work of the author of Childe Harold, — but then they are not so well read in F—g—d and Rosa Matilda as I am; and, besides, they seem to forget that *you* promised, about a month or two ago, not to write any more for years. Seriously," &c. &c.

I quote this foolish banter merely to show how safely, even on his most sensitive points, one might venture to jest with him.

† We find D'Argenson thus encouraging Voltaire to break a similar vow: — "Continue to write without fear for five-and-twenty years longer, but write poetry, notwithstanding your oath in the preface to Newton."

volcano, and sends him out again. I can't think it all over yet.

" My departure for the Continent depends, in some measure, on the *in*continent. I have two country invitations at home, and don't know what to say or do. In the mean time, I have bought a macaw and a parrot, and have got up my books; and I box and fence daily, and go out very little.

" At this present writing, Louis the Gouty is wheeling in triumph into Piccadilly, in all the pomp and rabblement of royalty. I had an offer of seats to see them pass; but, as I have seen a Sultan going to mosque, and been at *his* reception of an ambassador, the most Christian King 'hath no attractions for me:' —though in some coming year of the Hegira, I should not dislike to see the place where he *had* reigned, shortly after the second revolution, and a happy sovereignty of two months, the last six weeks being civil war.

" Pray write, and deem me ever," &c.

LETTER 176. TO MR. MURRAY.

" April 21. 1814.

" Many thanks with the letters which I return. You know I am a jacobin, and could not wear white, nor see the installation of Louis the Gouty.

" This is sad news, and very hard upon the sufferers at any, but more at *such* a time — I mean the Bayonne sortie.

" You should urge Moore to come *out*.

" P. S. I want *Moreri* to purchase for good and all. I have a Bayle, but want Moreri too.

"P. S. Perry hath a piece of compliment to-day; but I think the *name* might have been as well omitted. No matter; they can but throw the old story of inconsistency in my teeth—let them,—I mean, as to not publishing. However, *now* I will keep my word. Nothing but the occasion, which was *physically* irresistible, made me swerve; and I thought an *anonyme* within my *pact* with the public. It is the only thing I have or shall set about."

LETTER 177. TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 25. 1814.

"Let Mr. Gifford have the letter and return it at his leisure. I would have offered it, had I thought that he liked things of the kind.

"Do you want the last page *immediately!* I have doubts about the lines being worth printing; at any rate, I must see them again and alter some passages, before they go forth in any shape into the *ocean* of circulation;—a very conceited phrase, by the by: well then—*channel* of publication will do.

"'I am not i' the vein,' or I could knock off a stanza or three for the Ode, that might answer the purpose better.* At all events, I *must* see the lines

* Mr. Murray had requested of him to make some additions to the Ode, so as to save the stamp duty imposed upon publications not exceeding a single sheet; and he afterwards added, in successive editions, five or six stanzas, the original number being but eleven. There were also three more stanzas, which he never printed, but which, for the just tribute they contain to Washington, are worthy of being preserved:—

again *first*, as there be two I have altered in my mind's manuscript already. Has any one seen or judged of them? that is the criterion by which I will abide — only give me a *fair* report, and 'nothing extenuate,' as I will in that case do something else.

" Ever," &c.

" I want *Moreri*, and an *Athenæus*."

" There was a day — there was an hour,
While earth was Gaul's — Gaul thine —
When that immeasurable power
Unsated to resign
Had been an act of purer fame
Than gathers round Marengo's name
And gilded thy decline,
Through the long twilight of all time,
Despite some passing clouds of crime.

" But thou, forsooth, must be a king,
And don the purple vest,
As if that foolish robe could wring
Remembrance from thy breast.
Where is that faded garment? where
The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
The star — the string — the crest?
Vain froward child of empire! say,
Are all thy playthings snatch'd away?

" Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the great;
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state?
Yes — one — the first — the last — the best —
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeathed the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but One!".

LETTER 178. TO MR. MURRAY.

" April 26. 1814.

"I have been thinking that it might be as well to publish no more of the Ode separately, but incorporate it with any of the other things, and include the smaller poem too (in that case)—which I must previously correct, nevertheless. I can't, for the head of me, add a line worth scribbling; my 'vein' is quite gone, and my present occupations are of the gymnastic order — boxing and fencing — and my principal conversation is with my macaw and Bayle. I want my Moreri, and I want Athenæus.

" P. S. I hope you sent back that poetical packet to the address which I forwarded to you on Sunday: if not, pray do; or I shall have the author screaming after his Epic."

LETTER 179. TO MR. MURRAY.

" April 26. 1814.

" I have no guess at your author, — but it is a noble poem *, and worth a thousand odes of anybody's. I suppose I may keep this copy; — after reading it, I really regret having written my own. I say this very sincerely, albeit unused to think humbly of myself.

"I don't like the additional stanzas *at all*, and they had better be left out. The fact is, I can't do any

* A Poem by Mr. Stratford Canning, full of spirit and power, entitled " Buonaparte." In a subsequent note to Mr. Murray, Lord Byron says, — " I do not think less highly of ' Buonaparte ' for knowing the author. I was aware that he was a man of talent, but did not suspect him of possessing *all* the *family* talents in such perfection."

thing I am asked to do, however gladly I *would;* and at the end of a week my interest in a composition goes off. This will account to you for my doing no better for your 'Stamp Duty' postscript.

"The S. R. is very civil—but what do they mean by Childe Harold resembling Marmion? and the next two, Giaour and Bride, *not* resembling Scott? I certainly never intended to copy him; but, if there be any copyism, it must be in the two poems, where the same versification is adopted. However, they exempt The Corsair from all resemblance to any thing, though I rather wonder at his escape.

"If ever I did any thing original, it was in Childe Harold, which *I* prefer to the other things always, after the first week. Yesterday I re-read English Bards;—bating the *malice*, it is the *best.*

"Ever," &c.

A resolution was, about this time, adopted by him, which, however strange and precipitate it appeared, a knowledge of the previous state of his mind may enable us to account for satisfactorily. He had now, for two years, been drawing upon the admiration of the public with a rapidity and success which seemed to defy exhaustion,—having crowded, indeed, into that brief interval the materials of a long life of fame. But admiration is a sort of impost from which most minds are but too willing to relieve themselves. The eye grows weary of looking up to the same object of wonder, and begins to exchange, at last, the delight of observing its elevation for the less generous pleasure of watching and speculating on its fall. The reputation of Lord Byron had already begun to ex-

perience some of these consequences of its own prolonged and constantly renewed splendour. Even among that host of admirers who would have been the last to find fault, there were some not unwilling to repose from praise; while they, who had been from the first reluctant eulogists, took advantage of these apparent symptoms of satiety to indulge in blame. *

* It was the fear of this sort of back-water current to which so rapid a flow of fame seemed liable, that led some even of his warmest admirers, ignorant as they were yet of the boundlessness of his resources, to tremble a little at the frequency of his appearances before the public. In one of my own letters to him, I find this apprehension thus expressed: — "If you did not write so well, — as the Royal wit observed, — I should say you write too much; at least, too much in the same strain. The Pythagoreans, you know, were of opinion that the reason why we do not hear or heed the music of the heavenly bodies is that they are always sounding in our ears; and I fear that even the influence of *your* song may be diminished by falling upon the world's dull ear too constantly."

The opinion, however, which a great writer of our day (himself one of the few to whom his remark replies) had the generosity, as well as sagacity, to pronounce on this point, at a time when Lord Byron was indulging in the fullest lavishment of his powers, must be regarded, after all, as the most judicious and wise: — "But they cater ill for the public," says Sir Walter Scott, "and give indifferent advice to the poet, supposing him possessed of the highest qualities of his art, who do not advise him to labour while the laurel around his brows yet retains its freshness. Sketches from Lord Byron are more valuable than finished pictures from others; nor are we at all sure that any labour which he might bestow in revisal would not rather efface than refine those outlines of striking and powerful originality which they exhibit when flung rough from the hand of a master." — *Biographical Memoirs, by* Sir W. Scott.

The loud outcry raised, at the beginning of the present year, by his verses to the Princess Charlotte, had afforded a vent for much of this reserved venom; and the tone of disparagement in which some of his assailants now affected to speak of his poetry was, however absurd and contemptible in itself, precisely that sort of attack which was the most calculated to wound his, at once, proud and diffident spirit. As long as they confined themselves to blackening his moral and social character, so far from offending, their libels rather fell in with his own shadowy style of self-portraiture, and gratified the strange inverted ambition that possessed him. But the slighting opinion which they ventured to express of his genius, — seconded as it was by that inward dissatisfaction with his own powers, which they whose standard of excellence is highest are always the surest to feel, — mortified and disturbed him; and, being the first sounds of ill augury that had come across his triumphal career, startled him, as we have seen, into serious doubts of its continuance.

Had he been occupying himself, at the time, with any new task, that confidence in his own energies, which he never truly felt but while in the actual exercise of them, would have enabled him to forget these humiliations of the moment in the glow and excitement of anticipated success. But he had just pledged himself to the world to take a long farewell of poesy, — had sealed up that only fountain from which his heart ever drew refreshment or strength, — and thus was left, idly and helplessly, to brood over the daily taunts of his enemies, without the

power of avenging himself when they insulted his person, and but too much disposed to agree with them when they made light of his genius. "I am afraid, (he says, in noticing these attacks in one of his letters,) what you call *trash* is plaguily to the purpose, and very good sense into the bargain; and, to tell the truth, for some little time past, I have been myself much of the same opinion."

In this sensitive state of mind,—which he but ill disguised or relieved by an exterior of gay defiance or philosophic contempt,—we can hardly feel surprised that he should have, all at once, come to the resolution, not only of persevering in his determination to write no more in future, but of purchasing back the whole of his past copyrights, and suppressing every page and line he had ever written. On his first mention of this design, Mr. Murray naturally doubted as to its seriousness; but the arrival of the following letter, enclosing a draft for the amount of the copyrights, put his intentions beyond question.

LETTER 180. TO MR. MURRAY.

"2. Albany, April 29. 1814.

"Dear Sir,

"I enclose a draft for the money; when paid, send the copyright. I release you from the thousand pounds agreed on for The Giaour and Bride, and there's an end.

"If any accident occurs to me, you may do then as you please; but, with the exception of two copies of each for *yourself* only, I expect and request that

the advertisements be withdrawn, and the remaining copies of *all* destroyed; and any expense so incurred I will be glad to defray.

"For all this, it might be as well to assign some reason. I have none to give, except my own caprice, and I do not consider the circumstances of consequence enough to require explanation.

"In course, I need hardly assure you that they never shall be published with my consent, directly, or indirectly, by any other person whatsoever,—that I am perfectly satisfied, and have every reason so to be, with your conduct in all transactions between us as publisher and author.

"It will give me great pleasure to preserve your acquaintance, and to consider you as my friend. Believe me very truly, and for much attention,

"Your obliged and very obedient servant,

"BYRON.

"P. S. I do not think that I have overdrawn at Hammersley's; but if *that* be the case, I can draw for the superflux on Hoare's. The draft is *5l.* short, but that I will make up. On payment — *not* before — return the copyright papers."

In such a conjuncture, an appeal to his good nature and considerateness was, as Mr. Murray well judged, his best resource; and the following prompt reply, will show how easily, and at once, it succeeded.

LETTER 181. TO MR. MURRAY.

"May 1. 1814.

"Dear Sir,

"If your present note is serious, and it really would be inconvenient, there is an end of the matter; tear my draft, and go on as usual: in that case, we will recur to our former basis. That *I* was perfectly *serious*, in wishing to suppress all future publication, is true; but certainly not to interfere with the convenience of others, and more particularly your own. Some day, I will tell you the reason of this apparently strange resolution. At present, it may be enough to say that I recall it at your suggestion; and as it appears to have annoyed you, I lose no time in saying so.

"Yours truly,

"B."

During my stay in town this year, we were almost daily together; and it is in no spirit of flattery to the dead I say, that the more intimately I became acquainted with his disposition and character, the more warmly I felt disposed to take an interest in every thing that concerned him. Not that, in the opportunities thus afforded me of observing more closely his defects, I did not discover much to lament, and not a little to condemn. But there was still, in the neighbourhood of even his worst faults, some atoning good quality, which was always sure, if brought kindly and with management into play, to neutralise their ill effects. The very frankness, indeed, with which he avowed his errors seemed to imply a confi-

dence in his own power of redeeming them, — a consciousness that he could afford to be sincere. There was also, in such entire unreserve, a pledge that nothing worse remained behind; and the same quality that laid open the blemishes of his nature gave security for its honesty. "The cleanness and purity of one's mind," says Pope, "is never better proved than in discovering its own faults, at first view; as when a stream shows the dirt at its bottom, it shows also the transparency of the water."

The theatre was, at this time, his favourite place of resort. We have seen how enthusiastically he expresses himself on the subject of Mr. Kean's acting, and it was frequently my good fortune, during this season, to share in his enjoyment of it, — the orchestra being, more than once, the place where, for a nearer view of the actor's countenance, we took our station. For Kean's benefit, on the 25th of May, a large party had been made by Lady J**, to which we both belonged; but Lord Byron having also taken a box for the occasion, so anxious was he to enjoy the representation uninterrupted, that, by rather an unsocial arrangement, only himself and I occupied his box during the play, while every other in the house was crowded almost to suffocation; nor did we join the remainder of our friends till supper. Between the two parties, however, Mr. Kean had no reason to complain of a want of homage to his talents; as Lord J * *, on that occasion, presented him with a hundred pound share in the theatre; while Lord Byron sent him, next day,

the sum of fifty guineas*; and, not long after, on seeing him act some of his favourite parts, made him presents of a handsome snuff-box and a costly Turkish sword.

Such effect had the passionate energy of Kean's acting on his mind, that, once, in seeing him play Sir Giles Overreach, he was so affected as to be seized with a sort of convulsive fit; and we shall find him, some years after, in Italy, when the representation of Alfieri's tragedy of Mirra had agitated him in the same violent manner, comparing the two instances as the only ones in his life when "any thing under reality" had been able to move him so powerfully.

The following are a few of the notes which I received from him during this visit to town.

* To such lengths did he, at this time, carry his enthusiasm for Kean, that when Miss O'Neil soon after appeared, and, by her matchless representation of feminine tenderness, attracted all eyes and hearts, he was not only a little jealous of her reputation, as interfering with that of his favourite, but, in order to guard himself against the risk of becoming a convert, refused to go to see her act. I endeavoured sometimes to persuade him into witnessing, at least, one of her performances; but his answer was, (punning upon Shakspeare's word, "unanealed,") "No — I'm resolved to continue *un-Oneiled*."

To the great queen of all actresses, however, it will be seen, by the following extract from one of his journals, he rendered due justice: —

"Of actors, Cooke was the most natural, Kemble the most supernatural, — Kean the medium between the two. But Mrs. Siddons was worth them all put together." — *Detached Thoughts.*

TO MR. MOORE.

" May 4. 1814.

" Last night we supp'd at R——fe's board, &c. *

" I wish people would not shirk their *dinners* — ought it not to have been a dinner? † — and that d—d anchovy sandwich!

" That plaguy voice of yours made me sentimental, and almost fall in love with a girl who was recommending herself, during your song, by *hating* music. But the song is past, and my passion can wait, till the *pucelle* is more harmonious.

" Do you go to Lady Jersey's to-night? It is a large party, and you won't be bored into 'softening rocks,' and all that. Othello is to-morrow and Saturday too. Which day shall we go? when shall I see you? If you call, let it be after three, and as near four as you please.

" Ever," &c.

TO MR. MOORE.

" May 4. 1814.

" Dear Tom,

" Thou hast asked me for a song, and I enclose you an experiment, which has cost me something

* An epigram here followed, which, as founded on a scriptural allusion, I thought it better to omit.

† We had been invited by Lord R. to dine *after* the play,— an arrangement which, from its novelty, delighted Lord Byron exceedingly. The dinner, however, afterwards dwindled into a mere supper, and this change was long a subject of jocular resentment with him.

more than trouble, and is, therefore, less likely to be worth your taking any in your proposed setting.* Now, if it be so, throw it into the fire without *phrase*.

"Ever yours,
"BYRON.

"I speak not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name,
There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame;
But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

"Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace
Were those hours — can their joy or their bitterness cease?
We repent — we abjure — we will break from our chain —
We will part, — we will fly to — unite it again!

"Oh! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt!
Forgive me, adored one! — forsake, if thou wilt; —
But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,
And *man* shall not break it — whatever *thou* mayst.

"And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,
This soul, in its bitterest blackness, shall be;
And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet,
With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

"One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove;
And the heartless may wonder at all I resign —
Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to *mine*."

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* I had begged of him to write something for me to set to music.

TO MR. MOORE.

"Will you and Rogers come to my box at Covent, then? I shall be there, and none else — or I won't be there, if you *twain* would like to go without me. You will not get so good a place hustling among the publican *boxers*, with damnable apprentices (six feet high) on a back row. Will you both oblige me and come, — or one — or neither — or, what you will?

"P. S. An' you will, I will call for you at half-past six, or any time of your own dial."

TO MR. MOORE.

"I have gotten a box for Othello to-night, and send the ticket for your friends the R—fes. I seriously recommend to you to recommend to them to go for half an hour, if only to see the third act—they will not easily have another opportunity. We — at least, I — cannot be there, so there will be no one in their way. Will you give or send it to them? it will come with a better grace from you than me.

"I am in no good plight, but will dine at * *'s with you, if I can. There is music and Covent-g. — Will you go, at all events, to my box there afterwards, to see a *début* of a young 16* in the 'Child of Nature?'"

* Miss Foote's first appearance, which we witnessed together.

TO MR. MOORE.

" Sunday matin.

" Was not Iago perfection? particularly the last look. I was *close* to him (in the orchestra), and never saw an English countenance half so expressive.

" I am acquainted with no *im*material sensuality so delightful as good acting; and, as it is fitting there should be good plays, now and then, besides Shakspeare's, I wish you or Campbell would write one: — the rest of 'us youth' have not heart enough.

" You were cut up in the Champion — is it not so? this day so am I — even to *shocking* the editor. The critic writes well; and as, at present, poesy is not my passion predominant, and my snake of Aaron has swallowed up all the other serpents, I don't feel fractious. I send you the paper, which I mean to take in for the future. We go to M.'s together. Perhaps I shall see you before, but don't let me *bore* you, now nor ever.

" Ever, as now, truly and affectionately," &c.

TO MR. MOORE.

" May 5. 1814.

" Do you go to the Lady Cahir's this even? If you do — and whenever we are bound to the same follies — let us embark in the same 'Shippe of Fooles." I have been up till five, and up at nine; and feel heavy with only winking for the last three or four nights.

"I lost my party and place at supper trying to keep out of the way of * * * *. I would have gone away altogether, but that would have appeared a worse affectation than t'other. You are of course engaged to dinner, or we may go quietly together to my box at Covent Garden, and afterwards to this assemblage. Why did you go away so soon?

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. *Ought not* R * * * fe's supper to have been a dinner? Jackson is here, and I must fatigue myself into spirits."

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 18. 1814.

"Thanks — and punctuality. *What* has passed at * * * * *s House? I suppose that *I* am to know, and 'pars fui' of the conference. I regret that your * * * * *s will detain you so late, but I suppose you will be at Lady Jersey's. I am going earlier with Hobhouse. You recollect that to-morrow we sup and see Kean.

"P. S. *Two* to-morrow is the hour of pugilism."

The supper, to which he here looks forward, took place at Watier's, of which club he had lately become a member; and, as it may convey some idea of his irregular mode of diet, and thus account, in part, for the frequent derangement of his health, I shall here attempt, from recollection, a description of his supper on this occasion. We were to have been joined by Lord R * *, who however did not arrive, and the party accordingly consisted but of ourselves. Having

taken upon me to order the repast, and knowing that Lord Byron, for the last two days, had done nothing towards sustenance, beyond eating a few biscuits and (to appease appetite) chewing mastic, I desired that we should have a good supply of, at least, two kinds of fish. My companion, however, confined himself to lobsters, and of these finished two or three, to his own share, — interposing, sometimes, a small liqueur-glass of strong white brandy, sometimes a tumbler of very hot water, and then pure brandy again, to the amount of near half a dozen small glasses of the latter, without which, alternately with the hot water, he appeared to think the lobster could not be digested. After this, we had claret, of which having despatched two bottles between us, at about four o'clock in the morning we parted.

As Pope has thought his "delicious lobster-nights" worth commemorating, these particulars of one in which Lord Byron was concerned may also have some interest.

Among other nights of the same description which I had the happiness of passing with him, I remember once, in returning home from some assembly at rather a late hour, we saw lights in the windows of his old haunt Stevens's, in Bond Street, and agreed to stop there and sup. On entering, we found an old friend of his, Sir G * * W* *, who joined our party, and the lobsters and brandy and water being put in requisition, it was (as usual on such occasions) broad daylight before we separated.

LETTER 182. TO MR. MOORE.

" May 23. 1814.

" I must send you the Java government gazette of July 3d, 1813, just sent to me by Murray. Only think of *our* (for it is you and I) setting paper warriors in array in the Indian seas. Does not this sound like fame — something almost like *posterity ?* It is something to have scribblers squabbling about us 5000 miles off, while we are agreeing so well at home. Bring it with you in your pocket; —it will make you laugh, as it hath me. Ever yours,

" B.

" P. S. Oh the anecdote !" * * *

To the circumstance mentioned in this letter he recurs more than once in the Journals which he kept abroad; as thus, in a passage of his " Detached Thoughts," — where it will be perceived that, by a trifling lapse of memory, he represents himself as having produced this gazette, for the first time, on our way to dinner.

" In the year 1814, as Moore and I were going to dine with Lord Grey in Portman Square, I pulled out a ' Java Gazette' (which Murray had sent to me), in which there was a controversy on our respective merits as poets. It was amusing enough that we should be proceeding peaceably to the same table while they were squabbling about us in the Indian seas (to be sure the paper was dated six months before), and filling columns with Batavian criticism. But this is fame, I presume."

The following poem, written about this time, and, apparently, for the purpose of being recited at the Caledonian Meeting, I insert principally on account of the warm feeling which it breathes towards Scotland and her sons: —

" Who hath not glow'd above the page where Fame
Hath fix'd high Caledon's unconquer'd name;
The mountain-land which spurn'd the Roman chain,
And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,
Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand
No foe could tame — no tyrant could command.

" That race is gone — but still their children breathe,
And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath:
O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,
And, England! add their stubborn strength to thine.
The blood which flow'd with Wallace flows as free,
But now 'tis only shed for fame and thee!
Oh! pass not by the Northern veteran's claim,
But give support — the world hath given him fame!

" The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who bled
While cheerly following where the mighty led —
Who sleep beneath the undistinguish'd sod
Where happier comrades in their triumph trod,
To us bequeath — 'tis all their fate allows —
The sireless offspring and the lonely spouse:
She on high Albyn's dusky hills may raise
The tearful eye in melancholy gaze,
Or view, while shadowy auguries disclose
The Highland seer's anticipated woes,
The bleeding phantom of each martial form
Dim in the cloud, or darkling in the storm;
While sad, she chants the solitary song,
The soft lament for him who tarries long —
For him, whose distant relics vainly crave
The coronach's wild requiem to the brave!

" 'Tis Heaven — not man — must charm away the woe
Which bursts when Nature's feelings newly flow;
Yet tenderness and time may rob the tear
Of half its bitterness for one so dear:
A nation's gratitude perchance may spread
A thornless pillow for the widow'd head;
May lighten well her heart's maternal care,
And wean from penury the soldier's heir."

LETTER 183. TO MR. MOORE.

" May 31. 1814.

" As I shall probably not see you here to-day, I write to request that, if not inconvenient to yourself, you will stay in town till *Sunday;* if not to gratify me, yet to please a great many others, who will be very sorry to lose you. As for myself, I can only repeat that I wish you would either remain a long time with us, or not come at all; for these *snatches* of society make the subsequent separations bitterer than ever.

" I believe you think that I have not been quite fair with that Alpha and Omega of beauty, &c. with whom you would willingly have united me. But if you consider what her sister said on the subject, you will less wonder that my pride should have taken the alarm; particularly as nothing but the every-day flirtation of every-day people ever occurred between your heroine and myself. Had Lady * * appeared to wish it — or even *not* to oppose it — I would have gone on, and very possibly married (that is, *if* the other had been equally accordant) with the same indifference which has frozen over the 'Black Sea'

of almost all my passions. It is that very indifference which makes me so uncertain and apparently capricious. It is not eagerness of new pursuits, but that nothing impresses me sufficiently to *fix;* neither do I feel disgusted, but simply indifferent to almost all excitements. The proof of this is, that obstacles, the slightest even, *stop* me. This can hardly be *timidity,* for I have done some impudent things too, in my time; and in almost all cases, opposition is a stimulus. In mine, it is not; if a straw were in my way, I could not stoop to pick it up.

"I have sent this long tirade, because I would not have you suppose that I have been *trifling* designedly with you or others. If you think so, in the name of St. Hubert (the patron of antlers and hunters) let me be married out of hand — I don't care to whom, so it amuses any body else, and don't interfere with me much in the daytime. Ever," &c.

LETTER 184. TO MR. MOORE.

"June 14. 1814.

"I *could* be very sentimental now, but I won't. The truth is, that I have been all my life trying to harden my heart, and have not yet quite succeeded — though there are great hopes — and you do not know how it sunk with your departure. What adds to my regret is having seen so little of you during your stay in this crowded desert, where one ought to be able to bear thirst like a camel, — the springs are so few, and most of them so muddy.

"The newspapers will tell you all that is to be

told of emperors, &c.* They have dined, and supped, and shown their flat faces in all thoroughfares, and several saloons. Their uniforms are very becoming, but rather short in the skirts; and their

* In a few days after this, he sent me a long rhyming epistle full of jokes and pleasantries upon every thing and every one around him, of which the following are the only parts producible: —

" ' What say *I*? ' — not a syllable further in prose;
I'm your man ' of all measures,' dear Tom, — so, here goes!
Here goes, for a swim on the stream of old Time,
On those buoyant supporters the bladders of rhyme.
If our weight breaks them down, and we sink in the flood,
We are smother'd, at least, in respectable mud,
Where the divers of bathos lie drown'd in a heap,
And S * * 's last pæan has pillow'd his sleep; —
That ' felo de se ' who, half drunk with his malmsey,
Walk'd out of his depth and was lost in a calm sea,
Singing ' Glory to God ' in a spick-and-span stanza,
The like (since Tom Sternhold was choked) never man saw.

" The papers have told you, no doubt, of the fusses,
The fêtes, and the gapings to get at these Russes, —
Of his Majesty's suite, up from coachman to Hetman, —
And what dignity decks the flat face of the great man.
I saw him, last week, at two balls and a party, —
For a prince, his demeanour was rather too hearty.
You know, *we* are used to quite different graces,
* * * * * * *
The Czar's look, I own, was much brighter and brisker.
But then he is sadly deficient in whisker;
And wore but a starless blue coat, and in kersey-
mere breeches whisk'd round in a waltz with the J * *,
Who lovely as ever, seem'd just as delighted
With majesty's presence as those she invited."

conversation is a catechism, for which and the answers I refer you to those who have heard it.

"I think of leaving town for Newstead soon. If so, I shall not be remote from your recess, and (unless Mrs. M. detains you at home over the caudle-cup and a new cradle,) we will meet. You shall come to me, or I to you, as you like it;—but *meet* we will. An invitation from Aston has reached me, but I do not think I shall go. I have also heard of * * *—I should like to see her again, for I have not met her for years; and though 'the light that ne'er can shine again' is set, I do not know that 'one dear smile like those of old' might not make me for a moment forget the 'dulness' of 'life's stream.'

"I am going to R * *'s to-night—to one of those suppers which '*ought* to be dinners.' I have hardly seen her, and never *him*, since you set out. I told you, you were the last link of that chain. As for * *, we have not syllabled one another's names since. The post will not permit me to continue my scrawl. More anon.

"Ever, dear Moore, &c.

"P. S. Keep the Journal*; I care not what becomes of it; and if it has amused you I am glad that I kept it. 'Lara' is finished, and I am copying him for my third vol., now collecting;—but *no separate* publication."

* The Journal from which I have given extracts in the preceding pages.

TO MR. MURRAY.

" June 14. 1814.

" I return your packet of this morning. Have you heard that Bertrand has returned to Paris with the account of Napoleon's having lost his senses? It is a *report;* but, if true, I must, like Mr. Fitzgerald and Jeremiah (of lamentable memory), lay claim to prophecy; that is to say, of saying, that he *ought* to go out of his senses, in the penultimate stanza of a certain Ode, — the which, having been pronounced *nonsense* by several profound critics, has a still further pretension, by its unintelligibility, to inspiration. Ever," &c.

LETTER 185. TO MR. ROGERS.

" June 19. 1814.

" I am always obliged to trouble you with my awkwardnesses, and now I have a fresh one. Mr. W.* called on me several times, and I have missed the honour of making his acquaintance, which I regret, but which *you*, who know my desultory and uncertain habits, will not wonder at, and will, I am sure, attribute to any thing but a wish to offend a person who has shown me much kindness, and possesses character and talents entitled to general respect. My mornings are late, and passed in fencing and boxing, and a variety of most unpoetical exercises, very wholesome, &c., but would be very disagreeable to my friends, whom I am obliged to exclude during their operation. I never go out

* Mr. Wrangham.

till the evening, and I have not been fortunate enough to meet Mr. W. at Lord Lansdowne's or Lord Jersey's, where I had hoped to pay him my respects.

"I would have written to him, but a few words from you will go further than all the apologetical sesquipedalities I could muster on the occasion. It is only to say that, without intending it, I contrive to behave very ill to every body, and am very sorry for it.

"Ever, dear R.," &c.

The following undated notes to Mr. Rogers must have been written about the same time:—

"Sunday.

"Your non-attendance at Corinne's is very *à propos*, as I was on the eve of sending you an excuse. I do not feel well enough to go there this evening, and have been obliged to despatch an apology. I believe I need not add one for not accepting Mr. Sheridan's invitation on Wednesday, which I fancy both you and I understood in the same sense:—with him the saying of Mirabeau, that '*words* are *things*,' is not to be taken literally.

"Ever," &c.

"I will call for you at a quarter before *seven*, if that will suit you. I return you Sir Proteus *, and

* A satirical pamphlet, in which all the writers of the day were attacked.

shall merely add in return, as Johnson said of, and to, somebody or other, 'Are we alive after all this censure?'

"Believe me," &c.

"Tuesday.

"Sheridan was yesterday, at first, too sober to remember your invitation, but in the dregs of the third bottle he fished up his memory. The Staël out-talked Whitbread, was *ironed* by Sheridan, confounded Sir Humphry, and utterly perplexed your slave. The rest (great names in the red book, nevertheless,) were mere segments of the circle. Ma'mselle danced a Russ saraband with great vigour, grace, and expression.

"Ever," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"June 21. 1814.

"I suppose 'Lara' is gone to the devil,—which is no great matter, only let me know, that I may be saved the trouble of copying the rest, and put the first part into the fire. I really have no anxiety about it, and shall not be sorry to be saved the copying, which goes on very slowly, and may prove to you that you may *speak out*—or I should be less sluggish. Yours," &c.

LETTER 186. TO MR. ROGERS.

"June 27. 1814.

"You could not have made me a more acceptable present than Jacqueline,—she is all grace, and soft-

ness, and poetry; there is so much of the last, that we do not feel the want of story, which is simple, yet *enough*. I wonder that you do not oftener unbend to more of the same kind. I have some sympathy with the *softer* affections, though very little in *my* way, and no one can depict them so truly and successfully as yourself. I have half a mind to pay you in kind, or rather *un*kind, for I have just 'supped full of horror' in two cantos of darkness and dismay.

"Do you go to Lord Essex's to-night? if so, will you let me call for you at your own hour? I dined with Holland-house yesterday at Lord Cowper's; my Lady very gracious, which she can be more than any one when she likes. I was not sorry to see them again, for I can't forget that they have been very kind to me. Ever yours most truly,

"Bn.

"P. S. Is there any chance or possibility of making it up with Lord Carlisle, as I feel disposed to do any thing reasonable or unreasonable to effect it? I would before, but for the 'Courier,' and the possible misconstructions at such a time. Perpend, pronounce."

On my return to London, for a short time, at the beginning of July, I found his poem of 'Lara,' which he had begun at the latter end of May, in the hands of the printer, and nearly ready for publication. He had, before I left town, repeated to me, as we were on our way to some evening party, the first one hundred and twenty lines of the poem, which he

had written the day before, — at the same time giving me a general sketch of the characters and the story.

His short notes to Mr. Murray, during the printing of this work, are of the same impatient and whimsical character as those, of which I have already given specimens, in my account of his preceding publications: but, as matter of more interest now presses upon us, I shall forbear from transcribing them at length. In one of them he says, "I have just corrected some of the most horrible blunders that ever crept into a proof:"—in another, "I hope the next proof will be better; this was one which would have consoled Job, if it had been of his 'enemy's book:'" — a third contains only the following words: "Dear sir, you demanded more *battle* — there it is.

"Yours," &c.

The two letters that immediately follow were addressed to me, at this time, in town.

LETTER 187. TO MR. MOORE.

"July 8, 1814.

"I returned to town last night, and had some hopes of seeing you to-day, and would have called,— but I have been (though in exceeding distempered good health) a little head-achy with free living, as it is called, and am now at the freezing point of returning soberness. Of course, I should be sorry that our parallel lines did not deviate into intersection before you return to the country, — after that

same nonsuit*, whereof the papers have told us, — but, as you must be much occupied, I won't be affronted, should your time and business militate against our meeting.

"Rogers and I have almost coalesced into a joint invasion of the public. Whether it will take place or not, I do not yet know, and I am afraid Jacqueline (which is very beautiful) will be in bad company.† But in this case, the lady will not be the sufferer.

"I am going to the sea, and then to Scotland; and I have been doing nothing, — that is, no good, — and am very truly," &c.

LETTER 188. TO MR. MOORE.

"I suppose, by your non-appearance, that the philosophy of my note, and the previous silence of the writer, have put or kept you in *humeur*. Never mind — it is hardly worth while.

"This day have I received information from my man of law of the *non* — and never likely to be — performance of purchase by Mr. Claughton, of *im*-pecuniary memory. He don't know what to do, or when to pay; and so all my hopes and worldly projects and prospects are gone to the devil. He (the purchaser, and the devil too, for aught I care,) and I, and my legal advisers, are to meet to-morrow,

* He alludes to an action for piracy brought by Mr. Power (the publisher of my musical works), to the trial of which I had been summoned as a witness.

† Lord Byron afterwards proposed that I should make a third in this publication; but the honour was a perilous one, and I begged leave to decline it.

the said purchaser having first taken special care to enquire 'whether I would meet him with temper?' — Certainly. The question is this — I shall either have the estate back, which is as good as ruin, or I shall go on with him dawdling, which is rather worse. I have brought my pigs to a Mussulman market. If I had but a wife now, and children, of whose paternity I entertained doubts, I should be happy, or rather fortunate, as Candide or Scarmentado. In the mean time, if you don't come and see me, I shall think that Sam.'s bank is broke too; and that you, having assets there, are despairing of more than a piastre in the pound for your dividend. Ever," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

" July 11. 1814.

" You shall have one of the pictures. I wish you to send the proof of 'Lara' to Mr. Moore, 33. Bury Street, *to-night*, as he leaves town to-morrow, and wishes to see it before he goes*; and I am also willing to have the benefit of his remarks. Yours," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

" July 18. 1814.

" I think *you* will be satisfied even to *repletion* with our northern friends †, and I won't deprive you

* In a note which I wrote to him, before starting, next day, I find the following: — " I got Lara at three o'clock this morning — read him before I slept, and was enraptured. I take the proofs with me."

† He here refers to an article in the number of the Edinburgh Review, just then published (No. 45.), on The Corsair and Bride of Abydos.

longer of what I think will give you pleasure; for my own part, my modesty, or my vanity, must be silent.

"P. S. If you could spare it for an hour in the evening, I wish you to send it up to Mrs. Leigh, your neighbour, at the London Hotel, Albemarle Street."

LETTER 189. TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 23. 1814.

"I am sorry to say that the print* is by no means approved of by those who have seen it, who are pretty conversant with the original, as well as the picture from whence it is taken. I rather suspect that it is from the *copy* and not the *exhibited* portrait, and in this dilemma would recommend a suspension, if not an abandonment, of the *prefixion* to the volumes which you purpose inflicting upon the public.

"With regard to *Lara*, don't be in any hurry. I have not yet made up my mind on the subject, nor know what to think or do till I hear from you; and Mr. Moore appeared to me in a similar state of indetermination. I do not know that it may not be better to *reserve* it for the *entire* publication you proposed, and not adventure in hardy singleness, or even backed by the fairy Jacqueline. I have been seized with all kinds of doubts, &c. &c. since I left London.

"Pray let me hear from you, and believe me," &c.

* An engraving by Agar from Phillips's portrait of him.

LETTER 190. TO MR. MURRAY.

" July 24. 1814.

" The minority must, in this case, carry it, so pray let it be so, for I don't care sixpence for any of the opinions you mention, on such a subject: and P * * must be a dunce to agree with them. For my own part, I have no objection at all; but Mrs. Leigh and my cousin must be better judges of the likeness than others; and they hate it; and so I won't have it at all.

" Mr. Hobhouse is right as for his conclusion: but I deny the premises. The name only is Spanish*; the country is not Spain, but the Morea.

" Waverley is the best and most interesting novel I have redde since — I don't know when. I like it as much as I hate * *, and * *, and * *, and all the feminine trash of the last four months. Besides, it is all easy to me, I have been in Scotland so much (though then young enough too), and feel at home with the people, Lowland and Gael.

" A note will correct what Mr. Hobhouse thinks an error (about the feudal system in Spain); — it is *not* Spain. If he puts a few words of prose any where, it will set all right.

" I have been ordered to town to vote. I shall disobey. There is no good in so much prating, since 'certain issues strokes should arbitrate.' If you have any thing to say, let me hear from you.

" Yours," &c.

* Alluding to Lara.

LETTER 191. TO MR. MURRAY.

" August 3. 1814.

" It is certainly a little extraordinary that you have not sent the Edinburgh Review, as I requested, and hoped it would not require a note a day to remind you. I see *advertisements* of Lara and Jacqueline; pray, *why?* when I requested you to postpone publication till my return to town.

" I have a most amusing epistle from the Ettrick bard — Hogg; in which, speaking of his bookseller, whom he denominates the 'shabbiest' of the *trade* for not 'lifting his bills,' he adds, in so many words, 'G—d d—n him and them both.' This is a pretty prelude to asking you to adopt him (the said Hogg); but this he wishes; and if you please, you and I will talk it over. He has a poem ready for the press (and your *bills* too, if '*lift*able'), and bestows some benedictions on Mr. Moore for his abduction of Lara from the forthcoming Miscellany.*

" P. S. Sincerely, I think Mr. Hogg would suit you very well; and surely he is a man of great powers, and deserving of encouragement. I must knock out a Tale for him, and you should at all events consider before you reject his suit. Scott is gone to the Orkneys in a gale of wind; and Hogg says

* Mr. Hogg had been led to hope that he should be permitted to insert this poem in a Miscellany which he had at this time some thoughts of publishing; and whatever advice I may have given against such a mode of disposing of the work arose certainly not from any ill will to this ingenious and remarkable man, but from a consideration of what I thought most advantageous to the fame of Lord Byron.

that, during the said gale, 'he is sure that Scott is not quite at his ease, to say the best of it.' Ah! I wish these home-keeping bards could taste a Mediterranean white squall, or 'the Gut' in a gale of wind, or even the 'Bay of Biscay' with no wind at all."

LETTER 192. TO MR. MOORE.

"Hastings, August 3. 1814.

"By the time this reaches your dwelling, I shall (God wot) be in town again probably. I have been here renewing my acquaintance with my old friend Ocean; and I find his bosom as pleasant a pillow for an hour in the morning as his daughters of Paphos could be in the twilight. I have been swimming and eating turbot, and smuggling neat brandies and silk handkerchiefs, — and listening to my friend Hodgson's raptures about a pretty wife-elect of his, — and walking on cliffs, and tumbling down hills, and making the most of the 'dolce far-niente' for the last fortnight. I met a son of Lord Erskine's, who says he has been married a year, and is the 'happiest of men;' and I have met the aforesaid H., who is also the 'happiest of men;' so, it is worth while being here, if only to witness the superlative felicity of these foxes, who have cut off their tails, and would persuade the rest to part with their brushes to keep them in countenance.

"It rejoiceth me that you like 'Lara.' Jeffrey is out with his 45th Number, which I suppose you have got. He is only too kind to me, in my share of it, and I begin to fancy myself a golden pheasant, upon the strength of the plumage wherewith he hath

bedecked me. But then, 'surgi tamari,' &c. — the gentlemen of the Champion, and Perry, have got hold (I know not how) of the condolatory address to Lady J. on the picture-abduction by our R * * *, and have published them — with my name, too, smack — without even asking leave, or enquiring whether or no! D—n their impudence, and d—n every thing. It has put me out of patience, and so, I shall say no more about it.

"You shall have Lara and Jacque (both with some additions) when out; but I am still demurring and delaying, and in a fuss, and so is R. in his way.

"Newstead is to be mine again. Claughton forfeits twenty-five thousand pounds; but that don't prevent me from being very prettily ruined. I mean to bury myself there — and let my beard grow — and hate you all.

"Oh! I have had the most amusing letter from Hogg, the Ettrick minstrel and shepherd. He wants me to recommend him to Murray; and, speaking of his present bookseller, whose 'bills' are never 'lifted,' he adds, *totidem verbis*, 'God d—n him and them both.' I laughed, and so would you too, at the way in which this execration is introduced. The said Hogg is a strange being, but of great, though uncouth, powers. I think very highly of him, as a poet; but he, and half of these Scotch and Lake troubadours, are spoilt by living in little circles and petty societies. London and the world is the only place to take the conceit out of a man — in the milling phrase. Scott, he says, is gone to the Orkneys

in a gale of wind; — during which wind, he affirms, the said Scott, 'he is sure, is not at his ease, — to say the best of it.' Lord, Lord, if these homekeeping minstrels had crossed your Atlantic or my Mediterranean, and tasted a little open boating in a white squall — or a gale in 'the Gut' — or the 'Bay of Biscay,' with no gale at all — how it would enliven and introduce them to a few of the sensations! — to say nothing of an illicit amour or two upon shore, in the way of essay upon the Passions, beginning with simple adultery, and compounding it as they went along.

"I have forwarded your letter to Murray, — by the way, you had addressed it to *Miller*. Pray write to me, and say what art thou doing? 'Not finished!' — Oons! how is this? — these 'flaws and starts' must be 'authorised by your grandam,' and are unbecoming of any other author. I was sorry to hear of your discrepancy with the * *s, or rather your abjuration of agreement. I don't want to be impertinent, or buffoon on a serious subject, and am therefore at a loss what to say.

"I hope nothing will induce you to abate from the proper price of your poem, as long as there is a prospect of getting it. For my own part, I have *seriously* and *not whiningly*, (for that is not my way — at least, it used not to be,) neither hopes, nor prospects, and scarcely even wishes. I am, in some respects, happy, but not in a manner that can or ought to last, — but enough of that. The worst of it is, I feel quite enervated and indifferent. I really do not know, if Jupiter were to offer me my choice

of the contents of his benevolent cask, what I would pick out of it. If I was born, as the nurses say, with a 'silver spoon in my mouth,' it has stuck in my throat, and spoiled my palate, so that nothing put into it is swallowed with much relish, — unless it be cayenne. However, I have grievances enough to occupy me that way too; — but for fear of adding to yours by this pestilent long diatribe, I postpone the reading of them, *sine die*.

"Ever, dear M., yours, &c.

"P. S. Don't forget my godson. You could not have fixed on a fitter porter for his sins than me, being used to carry double without inconvenience."

LETTER 193. TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 4. 1814.

"Not having received the slightest answer to my last three letters, nor the book (the last number of the Edinburgh Review) which they requested, I presume that you were the unfortunate person who perished in the pagoda on Monday last, and address this rather to your executors than yourself, regretting that you should have had the ill luck to be the sole victim on that joyous occasion.

"I beg leave, then, to inform these gentlemen (whoever they may be) that I am a little surprised at the previous neglect of the deceased, and also at observing an advertisement of an approaching publication on Saturday next, against the which I protested, and do protest for the present.

"Yours (or theirs), &c.

"B."

LETTER 194. TO MR. MURRAY.

" August 5. 1814.

" The Edinburgh Review is arrived — thanks. I enclose Mr. Hobhouse's letter, from which you will perceive the work you have made. However, I have done: you must send my rhymes to the devil your own way. It seems, also, that the 'faithful and spirited likeness' is another of your publications. I wish you joy of it; but it is no likeness—that is the point. Seriously, if I have delayed your journey to Scotland, I am sorry that you carried your complaisance so far; particularly as upon trifles you have a more summary method; — witness the grammar of Hobhouse's 'bit of prose,' which has put him and me into a fever.

" Hogg must translate his own words: *'lifting'* is a quotation from his letter, together with 'God d—n,' &c., which I suppose requires no translation.

" I was unaware of the contents of Mr. Moore's letter; I think your offer very handsome, but of that you and he must judge. If he can get more, you won't wonder that he should accept it.

" Out with Lara, since it must be. The tome looks pretty enough — on the outside. I shall be in town next week, and in the mean time wish you a pleasant journey.

" Yours," &c.

LETTER 195. TO MR. MOORE.

" August 12. 1814.

" I was *not* alone, nor will be while I can help it. Newstead is not yet decided. Claughton is to make

a grand effort by Saturday week to complete, — if not, he must give up twenty-five thousand pounds and the estate, with expenses, &c. &c. If I resume the Abbacy, you shall have due notice, and a cell set apart for your reception, with a pious welcome. Rogers I have not seen, but Larry and Jacky came out a few days ago. Of their effect I know nothing.

" There is something very amusing in *your* being an Edinburgh Reviewer. You know, I suppose, that T * * is none of the placidest, and may possibly enact some tragedy on being told that he is only a fool. If, now, Jeffery were to be slain on account of an article of yours, there would be a fine conclusion. For my part, as Mrs. Winifred Jenkins says, 'he has done the handsome thing by me,' particularly in his last number; so, he is the best of men and the ablest of critics, and I won't have him killed, — though I dare say many wish he were, for being so good-humoured.

" Before I left Hastings I got in a passion with an ink bottle, which I flung out of the window one night with a vengeance; — and what then? Why, next morning I was horrified by seeing that it had struck, and split upon, the petticoat of Euterpe's graven image in the garden, and grimed her as if it were on purpose.* Only think of my distress, —

* His servant had brought him up a large jar of ink, into which, not supposing it to be full, he had thrust his pen down to the very bottom. Enraged, on finding it come out all smeared with ink, he flung the bottle out of the window into the garden, where it lighted, as here described, upon one of eight leaden Muses, that had been imported, some time before, from Holland, — the ninth having been, by some accident, left behind.

and the epigrams that might be engendered on the Muse and her misadventure.

"I had an adventure almost as ridiculous, at some private theatricals near Cambridge — though of a different description — since I saw you last. I quarrelled with a man in the dark for asking me who I was (insolently enough to be sure), and followed him into the green-room (a *stable*) in a rage, amongst a set of people I never saw before. He turned out to be a low comedian, engaged to act with the amateurs, and to be a civil-spoken man enough, when he found out that nothing very pleasant was to be got by rudeness. But you would have been amused with the row, and the dialogue, and the dress — or rather the undress — of the party, where I had introduced myself in a devil of a hurry, and the astonishment that ensued. I had gone out of the theatre, for coolness, into the garden; — there I had tumbled over some dogs, and, coming away from them in very ill humour, encountered the man in a worse, which produced all this confusion.

"Well — and why don't you 'launch?' — Now is your time. The people are tolerably tired with me, and not very much enamoured of * *, who has just spawned a quarto of metaphysical blank verse, which is nevertheless only a part of a poem.

"Murray talks of divorcing Larry and Jacky — a bad sign for the authors, who, I suppose, will be divorced too, and throw the blame upon one another. Seriously, I don't care a cigar about it, and I don't see why Sam should.

"Let me hear from and of you and my godson. If a daughter, the name will do quite as well.

"Ever," &c.

LETTER 196. TO MR. MOORE.

"August 13. 1814.

"I wrote yesterday to Mayfield, and have just now enfranked your letter to mamma. My stay in town is so uncertain (not later than next week) that your packets for the north may not reach me; and as I know not exactly where I am going — however, *Newstead* is my most probable destination, and if you send your despatches before Tuesday, I can forward them to our new ally. But, after that day, you had better not trust to their arrival in time.

"* * has been exiled from Paris, *on dit*, for saying the Bourbons were old women. The Bourbons might have been content, I think, with returning the compliment.

"I told you all about Jacky and Larry yesterday, — they are to be separated, — at least, so says the grand M., and I know no more of the matter. Jeffrey has done me more than 'justice;' but as to tragedy — um! — I have no time for fiction at present. A man cannot paint a storm with the vessel under bare poles on a lee-shore. When I get to land, I will try what is to be done, and, if I founder, there be plenty of mine elders and betters to console Melpomene.

"When at Newstead, you must come over, if only for a day—should Mrs. M. be *exigeante* of your presence. The place is worth seeing, as a ruin, and I

can assure you there *was* some fun there, even in my time; but that is past. The ghosts *, however, and the gothics, and the waters, and the desolation, make it very lively still.

" Ever, dear Tom, yours," &c.

LETTER 197. TO MR. MURRAY.

" Newstead Abbey, September 2. 1814.

" I am obliged by what you have sent, but would rather not see any thing of the kind†; we have had enough of these things already, good and bad, and next month you need not trouble yourself to collect even the *higher* generation — on my account. It gives me much pleasure to hear of Mr. Hobhouse's

* It was, if I mistake not, during his recent visit to Newstead, that he himself actually fancied he saw the ghost of the Black Friar, which was supposed to have haunted the Abbey from the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and which he thus describes, from the recollection perhaps of his own fantasy, in Don Juan: —

" It was no mouse, but, lo! a monk, array'd
In cowl and beads and dusky garb, appear'd,
Now in the moonlight, and now lapsed in shade,
With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard:
His garments only a slight murmur made:
He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird,
But slowly; and as he pass'd Juan by,
Glanced, without pausing, on him a bright eye."

It is said, that the Newstead ghost appeared, also, to Lord Byron's cousin, Miss Fanny Parkins, and that she made a sketch of him from memory.

† The reviews and magazines of the month.

and Mr. Merivale's good entreatment by the journals you mention.

"I still think Mr. Hogg and yourself might make out an alliance. *Dodsley*'s was, I believe, the last decent thing of the kind, and *his* had great success in its day, and lasted several years; but then he had the double advantage of editing and publishing. The Spleen, and several of *Gray*'s odes, much of *Shenstone*, and many others of good repute, made their first appearance in his collection. Now, with the support of Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, &c., I see little reason why you should not do as well; and, if once fairly established, you would have assistance from the youngsters, I dare say. Stratford Canning (whose 'Buonaparte' is excellent), and many others, and Moore, and Hobhouse, and I, would try a fall now and then (if permitted), and you might coax Campbell, too, into it. By the by, *he* has an unpublished (though printed) poem on a scene in Germany, (Bavaria, I think,) which I saw last year, that is perfectly magnificent, and equal to himself. I wonder he don't publish it.

"Oh! — do you recollect S**, the engraver's, mad letter about not engraving Phillips's picture of Lord *Foley?* (as he blundered it;) well, I have traced it, I think. It seems, by the papers, a preacher of Johanna Southcote's is named *Foley;* and I can no way account for the said S**'s confusion of words and ideas, but by that of his head's running on Johanna and her apostles. It was a mercy he did not say Lord *Tozer.* You know, of course, that S** is a believer in this new (old) virgin of spiritual impregnation.

"I long to know what she will produce *; her being with child at sixty-five is indeed a miracle, but her getting any one to beget it, a greater.

"If you were not going to Paris or Scotland, I could send you some game: if you remain, let me know.

"P. S. A word or two of 'Lara,' which your enclosure brings before me. It is of no great promise separately; but, as connected with the other tales, it will do very well for the volumes you mean to publish. I would recommend this arrangement — Childe Harold, the smaller Poems, Giaour, Bride, Corsair, Lara; the last completes the series, and its very likeness renders it necessary to the others. Cawthorne writes that they are publishing *English Bards* in *Ireland:* pray enquire into this; because *it must* be stopped."

LETTER 198. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, September 7. 1814.

"I should think Mr. Hogg, for his own sake as well as yours, would be 'critical' as Iago himself in his editorial capacity; and that such a publication would answer his purpose, and yours too, with tolerable management. You should, however, have a good number to start with — I mean, *good* in quality;

* The following characteristic note, in reference to this passage, appears, in Mr. Gifford's hand-writing, on the copy of the above letter: — "It is a pity that Lord B. was ignorant of Jonson. The old poet has a Satire on the Court Pucelle that would have supplied him with some pleasantry on Johanna's pregnancy."

in these days, there can be little fear of not coming up to the mark in quantity. There must be many 'fine things' in Wordsworth; but I should think it difficult to make *six* quartos (the amount of the whole) all fine, particularly the pedler's portion of the poem; but there can be no doubt of his powers to do almost any thing.

"I *am* 'very idle.' I have read the few books I had with me, and been forced to fish, for lack of argument. I have caught a great many perch and some carp, which is a comfort, as one would not lose one's labour willingly.

"Pray, who corrects the press of your volumes? I hope 'The Corsair' is printed from the copy I corrected, with the additional lines in the first Canto, and some *notes* from Sismondi and Lavater, which I gave you to add thereto. The arrangement is very well.

"My cursed people have not sent my papers since Sunday, and I have lost Johanna's divorce from Jupiter. Who hath gotten her with prophet? Is it Sharpe, and how? * * * I should like to buy one of her seals: if salvation can be had at half-a-guinea a head, the landlord of the Crown and Anchor should be ashamed of himself for charging double for tickets to a mere terrestrial banquet. I am afraid, seriously, that these matters will lend a sad handle to your profane scoffers, and give a loose to much damnable laughter.

I have not seen Hunt's Sonnets nor Descent of Liberty: he has chosen a pretty place wherein to compose the last. Let me hear from you before you embark. Ever," &c.

LETTER 199. TO MR. MOORE.

" Newstead Abbey, September 15. 1814.

" This is the fourth letter I have begun to you within the month. Whether I shall finish or not, or burn it like the rest, I know not. When we meet, I will explain *why* I have not written — *why* I have not asked you here, as I wished — with a great many other *whys* and wherefores, which will keep cold. In short, you must excuse all my seeming omissions and commissions, and grant me more *re*mission than St. Athanasius will to yourself, if you lop off a single shred of mystery from his pious puzzle. It is my creed (and it may be St. Athanasius's too) that your article on T * * will get somebody killed, and *that*, on the *Saints*, get him d—d afterwards, which will be quite enow for one number. Oons, Tom! you must not meddle just now with the incomprehensible; for if Johanna Southcote turns out to be * * *

" Now for a little egotism. My affairs stand thus. To-morrow, I shall know whether a circumstance of importance enough to change many of my plans will occur or not. If it does not, I am off for Italy next month, and London, in the mean time, next week. I have got back Newstead and twenty-five thousand pounds (out of twenty-eight paid already), — as a 'sacrifice,' the late purchaser calls it, and he may choose his own name. I have paid some of my debts, and contracted others; but I have a few thousand pounds, which I can't spend after my own heart in this climate, and so, I shall go back to the south. Hobhouse, I think and hope, will go with me; but,

whether he will or not, I shall. I want to see Venice, and the Alps, and Parmesan cheeses, and look at the coast of Greece, or rather Epirus, from Italy, as I once did — or fancied I did — that of Italy, when off Corfu. All this, however, depends upon an event, which may, or may not, happen. Whether it will, I shall know probably to-morrow, and, if it does, I can't well go abroad at present.

" Pray pardon this parenthetical scrawl. You shall hear from me again soon; — I don't call this an answer. Ever most affectionately," &c.

The " circumstance of importance," to which he alludes in this letter, was his second proposal for Miss Milbanke, of which he was now waiting the result. His own account, in his Memoranda, of the circumstances that led to this step is, in substance, as far as I can trust my recollection, as follows. A person, who had for some time stood high in his affection and confidence, observing how cheerless and unsettled was the state both of his mind and prospects, advised him strenuously to marry; and, after much discussion, he consented. The next point for consideration was — who was to be the object of his choice; and while his friend mentioned one lady, he himself named Miss Milbanke. To this, however, his adviser strongly objected, — remarking to him, that Miss Milbanke had at present no fortune, and that his embarrassed affairs would not allow him to marry without one; that she was, moreover, a learned lady, which would not at all suit him. In consequence of these representations, he agreed that his

friend should write a proposal for him to the other lady named, which was accordingly done ; — and an answer, containing a refusal, arrived as they were, one morning, sitting together. " You see," said Lord Byron, " that, after all, Miss Milbanke is to be the person ; — I will write to her." He accordingly wrote on the moment, and, as soon as he had finished, his friend, remonstrating still strongly against his choice, took up the letter, — but, on reading it over, observed, " Well, really, this is a very pretty letter ; — it is a pity it should not go. I never read a prettier one."—" Then it *shall* go," said Lord Byron; and in so saying, sealed and sent off, on the instant, this fiat of his fate.

LETTER 200. TO MR. MOORE.

" Nd., September 15. 1814.

" I have written to you one letter to-night, but must send you this much more, as I have not franked my number, to say that I rejoice in my god-daughter, and will send her a coral and bells, which I hope she will accept, the moment I get back to London.

" My head is at this moment in a state of confusion, from various causes, which I can neither describe nor explain — but let that pass. My employments have been very rural — fishing, shooting, bathing, and boating. Books I have but few here, and those I have read ten times over, till sick of them. So, I have taken to breaking soda-water bottles with my pistols, and jumping into the water, and rowing over it, and firing at the fowls of the air. But why should I ' monster my nothings' to you, who are well em-

ployed, and happily too, I should hope? For my part, I am happy, too, in my way — but, as usual, have contrived to get into three or four perplexities, which I do not see my way through. But a few days, perhaps a day, will determine one of them.

"You do not say a word to me of your poem. I wish I could see or hear it. I neither could, nor would, do it or its author any harm. I believe I told you of Larry and Jacquy. A friend of mine was reading — at least a friend of his was reading — said Larry and Jacquy in a Brighton coach. A passenger took up the book and queried as to the author. The proprietor said 'there were *two*' — to which the answer of the unknown was, 'Ay, ay — a joint concern, I suppose, *summot* like Sternhold and Hopkins.'

"Is not this excellent? I would not have missed the 'vile comparison' to have 'scaped being one of the 'Arcades ambo et cantare pares.' Good night. Again yours."

LETTER 201. TO MR. MOORE.

"Newstead Abbey, Sept. 20. 1814.

"Here's to her who long
Hath waked the poet's sigh!
The girl who gave to song
What gold could never buy. — My dear Moore, I am going to be married — that is, I am accepted*, and one usually hopes the rest will follow. My

* On the day of the arrival of the lady's answer, he was sitting at dinner, when his gardener came in and presented him with his mother's wedding ring, which she had lost many

mother of the Gracchi (that *are* to be) *you* think too strait-laced for me, although the paragon of only children, and invested with 'golden opinions of all sorts of men,' and full of 'most blest conditions' as Desdemona herself. Miss Milbanke is the lady, and I have her father's invitation to proceed there in my elect capacity, — which, however, I cannot do till I have settled some business in London and got a blue coat.

"She is said to be an heiress, but of that I really know nothing certainly, and shall not enquire. But I do know, that she has talents and excellent qualities; and you will not deny her judgment, after having refused six suitors and taken me.

"Now, if you have any thing to say against this, pray do; my mind's made up, positively fixed, determined, and therefore I will listen to reason, because now it can do no harm. Things may occur to break it off, but I will hope not. In the mean time, I tell you (a *secret*, by the by, — at least, till I know she wishes it to be public,) that I have proposed and am accepted. You need not be in a hurry to wish me joy, for one mayn't be married for months. I am going to town to-morrow; but expect to be here, on my way there, within a fortnight.

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years before, and which the gardener had just found in digging up the mould under her window. Almost at the same moment, the letter from Miss Milbanke arrived; and Lord Byron exclaimed, "If it contains a consent, I will be married with this very ring." It *did* contain a very flattering acceptance of his proposal, and a duplicate of the letter had been sent to London, in case this should have missed him. — *Memoranda.*

" If this had not happened, I should have gone to Italy. In my way down, perhaps, you will meet me at Nottingham, and come over with me here. I need not say that nothing will give me greater pleasure. I must, of course, reform thoroughly; and, seriously, if I can contribute to her happiness, I shall secure my own. She is so good a person, that — that — in short, I wish I was a better. Ever," &c.

LETTER 202. TO THE COUNTESS OF * * *.

" Albany, October 5. 1814.

" Dear Lady * *,

" Your recollection and invitation do me great honour; but I am going to be 'married, and can't come.' My intended is two hundred miles off, and the moment my business here is arranged, I must set out in a great hurry to be happy. Miss Milbanke is the good-natured person who has undertaken me, and, of course, I am very much in love, and as silly as all single gentlemen must be in that sentimental situation. I have been accepted these three weeks; but when the event will take place, I don't exactly know. It depends partly upon lawyers, who are never in a hurry. One can be sure of nothing; but, at present, there appears no other interruption to this intention, which seems as mutual as possible, and now no secret, though I did not tell first, — and all our relatives are congratulating away to right and left in the most fatiguing manner.

" You perhaps know the lady. She is niece to Lady Melbourne, and cousin to Lady Cowper and others of your acquaintance, and has no fault, except

being a great deal too good for me, and that *I* must pardon, if nobody else should. It might have been *two* years ago, and, if it had, would have saved me a world of trouble. She has employed the interval in refusing about half a dozen of my particular friends, (as she did me once, by the way,) and has taken me at last, for which I am very much obliged to her. I wish it was well over, for I do hate bustle, and there is no marrying without some ; — and then, I must not marry in a black coat, they tell me, and I can't bear a blue one.

" Pray forgive me for scribbling all this nonsense. You know I must be serious all the rest of my life, and this is a parting piece of buffoonery, which I write with tears in my eyes, expecting to be agitated. Believe me most seriously and sincerely your obliged servant, BYRON.

" P. S. My best rems. to Lord * * on his return."

LETTER 203. TO MR. MOORE.

" October 7. 1814.

" Notwithstanding the contradictory paragraph in the Morning Chronicle, which must have been sent by * *, or perhaps — I know not why I should suspect Claughton of such a thing, and yet I partly do, because it might interrupt his renewal of purchase, if so disposed ; in short it matters not, but we are all in the road to matrimony — lawyers settling, relations congratulating, my intended as kind as heart could wish, and every one, whose opinion I value, very glad of it. All her relatives, and all mine too, seem equally pleased.

"Perry was very sorry, and has *re*-contradicted, as you will perceive by this day's paper. It was, to be sure, a devil of an insertion, since the first paragraph came from Sir Ralph's own County Journal, and this in the teeth of it would appear to him and his as *my* denial. But I have written to do away that, enclosing Perry's letter, which was very polite and kind.

"Nobody hates bustle so much as I do; but there seems a fatality over every scene of my drama, always a row of some sort or other. No matter — Fortune is my best friend; and as I acknowledge my obligations to her, I hope she will treat me better than she treated the Athenian, who took some merit to *himself* on some occasion, but (after that) took no more towns. In fact, *she*, that exquisite goddess, has hitherto carried me through every thing, and will I hope, now; since I own it will be all *her* doing.

"Well, now, for thee. Your article on * * is perfection itself. You must not leave off reviewing. By Jove, I believe you can do any thing. There is wit, and taste, and learning, and good humour (though not a whit less severe for that), in every line of that critique.

"Next to *your* being an E. Reviewer, *my* being of the same kidney, and Jeffrey's being such a friend to both, are amongst the events which I conceive were not calculated upon in Mr. — what's his name?'s — 'Essay on Probabilities.'

"But, Tom, I say — Oons! Scott menaces the 'Lord of the Isles.' Do you mean to compete? or lay by, till this wave has broke upon the *shelves?* (of booksellers, not rocks — a *broken* metaphor, by the

way.) You *ought* to be afraid of nobody; but your modesty is really as provoking and unnecessary as a * *'s. I am very merry, and have just been writing some elegiac stanzas on the death of Sir P. Parker. He was my first cousin, but never met since boyhood. Our relations desired me, and I have scribbled and given it to Perry, who will chronicle it to-morrow. I am as sorry for him as one could be for one I never saw since I was a child; but should not have wept melodiously, except 'at the request of friends.'

"I hope to get out of town and be married, but I shall take Newstead in my way; and you must meet me at Nottingham and accompany me to mine Abbey. I will tell you the day when I know it.

"Ever," &c.

"P. S. By the way my wife elect is perfection, and I hear of nothing but her merits and her wonders, and that she is 'very pretty.' Her expectations, I am told, are great; but *what*, I have not asked. I have not seen her these ten months."

LETTER 204. TO MR. MOORE.

"October 14. 1814.

"An' there were any thing in marriage that would make a difference between my friends and me, particularly in your case, I would 'none on't.' My agent sets off for Durham next week, and I shall follow him, taking Newstead and you in my way. I certainly did not address Miss Milbanke with these views, but it is likely she may prove a considerable *parti*. All her father can give, or leave

her, he will; and from her childless uncle, Lord Wentworth, whose barony, it is supposed, will devolve on Ly. Milbanke (her sister), she has expectations. But these will depend upon his own disposition, which seems very partial towards her. She is an only child, and Sir R.'s estates, though dipped by electioneering, are considerable. Part of them are settled on her; but whether *that* will be *dowered* now, I do not know,—though, from what has been intimated to me, it probably will. The lawyers are to settle this among them, and I am getting my property into matrimonial array, and myself ready for the journey to Seaham, which I must make in a week or ten days.

"I certainly did not dream that she was attached to me, which it seems she has been for some time. I also thought her of a very cold disposition, in which I was also mistaken — it is a long story, and I won't trouble you with it. As to her virtues, &c. &c. you will hear enough of them (for she is a kind of *pattern* in the north), without my running into a display on the subject. It is well that *one* of us is of such fame, since there is sad deficit in the *morale* of that article upon my part, — all owing to my 'bitch of a star,' as Captain Tranchemont says of his planet.

"Don't think you have not said enough of me in your article on T * *; what more could or need be said?

"Your long-delayed and expected work—I suppose you will take fright at 'The Lord of the Isles' and Scott now. You must do as you like,—I have said

my say. You ought to fear comparison with none, and any one would stare, who heard you were so tremulous, — though, after all, I believe it is the surest sign of talent. Good morning. I hope we shall meet soon, but I will write again, and perhaps you will meet me at Nottingham. Pray say so.

"P. S. If this union is productive, you shall name the first fruits."

LETTER 205. TO MR. HENRY DRURY.

"October 18. 1814.

"My dear Drury,

"Many thanks for your hitherto unacknowledged 'Anecdotes.' Now for one of mine — I am going to be married, and have been engaged this month. It is a long story, and, therefore, I won't tell it, — an old and (though I did not know it till lately) a *mutual* attachment. The very sad life I have led since I was your pupil must partly account for the offs and *ons* in this now to be arranged business. We are only waiting for the lawyers and settlements, &c.; and next week, or the week after, I shall go down to Seaham in the new character of a regular suitor for a wife of mine own.

"I hope Hodgson is in a fair way on the same voyage — I saw him and his idol at Hastings. I wish he would be married at the same time, — I should like to make a party, — like people electrified in a row, by (or rather through) the same chain, holding one another's hands, and all feeling the shock at once. I have not yet apprised him of this. He makes such a serious matter of all these things, and

is so 'melancholy and gentlemanlike,' that it is quite overcoming to us choice spirits.

"They say one shouldn't be married in a black coat. I won't have a blue one, — that's flat. I hate it.

"Yours," &c.

LETTER 206. TO MR. COWELL.

"October 22. 1814.

"My dear Cowell,

"Many and sincere thanks for your kind letter — the bet, or rather forfeit, was one hundred to Hawke, and fifty to Hay (nothing to Kelly), for a guinea received from each of the two former.* I shall feel much obliged by your setting me right if I am incorrect in this statement in any way, and have reasons for wishing you to recollect as much as possible of what passed, and state it to Hodgson. My reason is this: some time ago Mr. * * * required a bet of me which I never made, and of course refused to pay, and have heard no more of it; to prevent similar mistakes is my object in wishing you to remember well what passed, and to put Hodgson in possession of your memory on the subject.

"I hope to see you soon in my way through Cambridge. Remember me to H., and believe me ever and truly," &c.

Soon after the date of this letter, Lord Byron had to pay a visit to Cambridge for the purpose of voting

* He had agreed to forfeit these sums to the persons mentioned, should he ever marry.

for Mr. Clarke, who had been started by Trinity College as one of the candidates for Sir Busick Harwood's Professorship. On this occasion, a circumstance occurred which could not but be gratifying to him. As he was delivering in his vote to the Vice-Chancellor, in the Senate House, the undergraduates in the gallery ventured to testify their admiration of him by a general murmur of applause and stamping of the feet. For this breach of order, the gallery was immediately cleared by order of the Vice-Chancellor.

At the beginning of the month of December, being called up to town by business, I had opportunities, from being a good deal in my noble friend's society, of observing the state of his mind and feelings, under the prospect of the important change he was now about to undergo; and it was with pain I found that those sanguine hopes * with which I had sometimes looked forward to the happy influence of marriage, in winning him over to the brighter and better side of life, were, by a view of all the circumstances of his present destiny, considerably diminished; while, at the same time, not a few doubts and

* I had frequently, both in earnest and in jest, expressed these hopes to him; and, in one of my letters, after touching upon some matters relative to my own little domestic circle, I added, "This will all be unintelligible to you; though I sometimes cannot help thinking it within the range of possibility, that even *you*, volcano as you are, may, one day, cool down into something of the same *habitable* state. Indeed, when one thinks of lava having been converted into buttons for Isaac Hawkins Browne, there is no saying what such fiery things may be brought to at last."

misgivings, which had never before so strongly occurred to me, with regard to his own fitness, under any circumstances, for the matrimonial tie, filled me altogether with a degree of foreboding anxiety as to his fate, which the unfortunate events that followed but too fully justified.

The truth is, I fear, that rarely, if ever, have men of the higher order of genius shown themselves fitted for the calm affections and comforts that form the cement of domestic life. "One misfortune (says Pope) of extraordinary geniuses is, that their very friends are more apt to admire than love them." To this remark there have, no doubt, been exceptions,—and I should pronounce Lord Byron, from my own experience, to be one of them,—but it would not be difficult, perhaps, to show, from the very nature and pursuits of genius, that such must generally be the lot of all pre-eminently gifted with it; and that the same qualities which enable them to command admiration are also those that too often incapacitate them from conciliating love.

The very habits, indeed, of abstraction and self-study to which the occupations of men of genius lead, are, in themselves, necessarily, of an unsocial and detaching tendency, and require a large portion of indulgence from others not to be set down as unamiable. One of the chief sources, too, of sympathy and society between ordinary mortals being their dependence on each other's intellectual resources, the operation of this social principle must naturally be weakest in those whose own mental stores are most abundant and self-sufficing, and who,

rich in such materials for thinking within themselves, are rendered so far independent of any aid from others. It was this solitary luxury (which Plato called "banqueting his own thoughts") that led Pope, as well as Lord Byron, to prefer the silence and seclusion of his library to the most agreeable conversation. — And not only too, is the necessity of commerce with other minds less felt by such persons, but, from that fastidiousness which the opulence of their own resources generates, the society of those less gifted than themselves becomes often a restraint and burden, to which not all the charms of friendship, or even love, can reconcile them. "Nothing is so tiresome (says the poet of Vaucluse, in assigning a reason for not living with some of his dearest friends) as to converse with persons who have not the same information as one's self."

But it is the cultivation and exercise of the imaginative faculty that, more than any thing, tends to wean the man of genius from actual life, and, by substituting the sensibilities of the imagination for those of the heart, to render, at last, the medium through which he feels no less unreal than that through which he thinks. Those images of ideal good and beauty that surround him in his musings soon accustom him to consider all that is beneath this high standard unworthy of his care; till, at length, the heart becoming chilled as the fancy warms, it too often happens that, in proportion as he has refined and elevated his theory of all the social affections, he has unfitted himself for the

practice of them.* Hence so frequently it arises that, in persons of this temperament, we see some bright but artificial idol of the brain usurp the place of all real and natural objects of tenderness. The poet Dante, a wanderer away from wife and children, passed the whole of a restless and detached life in nursing his immortal dream of Beatrice; while Petrarch, who would not suffer his only daughter to reside beneath his roof, expended thirty-two years of poetry and passion on an idealised love.

It is, indeed, in the very nature and essence of genius to be for ever occupied intensely with Self, as the great centre and source of its strength. Like the sister Rachel, in Dante, sitting all day before her mirror,

> " mai non si smaga
> Del suo ammiraglio, e siede tutto giorno."

To this power of self-concentration, by which alone all the other powers of genius are made available, there is, of course, no such disturbing and fatal

* Of the lamentable contrast between sentiments and conduct, which this transfer of the seat of sensibility from the heart to the fancy produces, the annals of literary men afford unluckily too many examples. Alfieri, though he could write a sonnet full of tenderness to his mother, never saw her (says Mr. W. Rose) but once after their early separation, though he frequently passed within a few miles of her residence. The poet Young, with all his parade of domestic sorrows, was, it appears, a neglectful husband and harsh father; and Sterne (to use the words employed by Lord Byron) preferred " whining over a dead ass to relieving a living mother."

enemy as those sympathies and affections that draw the mind out actively towards others*; and, accordingly, it will be found that, among those who have felt within themselves a call to immortality, the greater number have, by a sort of instinct, kept aloof from such ties, and, instead of the softer duties and rewards of being amiable, reserved themselves for the high, hazardous chances of being great. In looking back through the lives of the most illustrious poets, — the class of intellect in which the characteristic features of genius are, perhaps, most strongly marked, — we shall find that, with scarcely one exception, from Homer down to Lord Byron, they have been, in their several degrees, restless and solitary spirits, with minds wrapped up, like silk-worms, in their own tasks, either strangers, or rebels to domestic ties, and bearing about with them a deposit for posterity in their souls, to the jealous watching and enriching of which almost all other thoughts and considerations have been sacrificed.

"To follow poetry as one ought (says the authority† I have already quoted), one must forget father and mother and cleave to it alone." In these few words is pointed out the sole path that leads genius to greatness. On such terms alone are the high

* It is the opinion of Diderot, in his Treatise on Acting, that not only in the art of which he treats, but in all those which are called imitative, the possession of real sensibility is a bar to eminence; — sensibility being, according to his view, "le caractère de la bonté de l'ame et de la médiocrité du génie."

† Pope.

places of fame to be won; — nothing less than the sacrifice of the entire man can achieve them. However delightful, therefore, may be the spectacle of a man of genius tamed and domesticated in society, taking docilely upon him the yoke of the social ties, and enlightening without disturbing the sphere in which he moves, we must nevertheless, in the midst of our admiration, bear in mind that it is not thus smoothly or amiably immortality has been ever struggled for, or won. The poet thus circumstanced may be popular, may be loved; for the happiness of himself and those linked with him he is in the right road, — but not for greatness. The marks by which Fame has always separated her great martyrs from the rest of mankind are not upon him, and the crown cannot be his. He may dazzle, may captivate the circle, and even the times in which he lives, but he is not for hereafter.

To the general description here given of that high class of human intelligences to which he belonged, the character of Lord Byron was, in many respects, a signal exception. Born with strong affections and ardent passions, the world had, from first to last, too firm a hold on his sympathies to let imagination altogether usurp the place of reality, either in his feelings, or in the objects of them. His life, indeed, was one continued struggle between that instinct of genius, which was for ever drawing him back into the lonely laboratory of Self, and those impulses of passion, ambition, and vanity, which again hurried him off into the crowd, and entangled him in its interests; and though it may be granted that he

would have been more purely and abstractedly the *poet*, had he been less thoroughly, in all his pursuits and propensities, the *man*, yet from this very mixture and alloy has it arisen that his pages bear so deeply the stamp of real life, and that in the works of no poet, with the exception of Shakspeare, can every various mood of the mind — whether solemn or gay, whether inclined to the ludicrous or the sublime, whether seeking to divert itself with the follies of society or panting after the grandeur of solitary nature — find so readily a strain of sentiment in accordance with its every passing tone.

But while the naturally warm cast of his affections and temperament gave thus a substance and truth to his social feelings which those of too many of his fellow votaries of Genius have wanted, it was not to be expected that an imagination of such range and power should have been so early developed and unrestrainedly indulged without producing, at last, some of those effects upon the heart which have invariably been found attendant on such a predominance of this faculty. It must have been observed, indeed, that the period when his natural affections flourished most healthily was before he had yet arrived at the full consciousness of his genius, — before Imagination had yet accustomed him to those glowing pictures, after gazing upon which all else appeared cold and colourless. From the moment of this initiation into the wonders of his own mind, a distaste for the realities of life began to grow upon him. Not even that intense craving after affection, which nature had implanted in him, could keep his ardour still alive in

a pursuit whose results fell so short of his "imaginings;" and though, from time to time, the combined warmth of his fancy and temperament was able to call up a feeling which to his eyes wore the semblance of love, it may be questioned whether his heart had ever much share in such passions, or whether, after his first launch into the boundless sea of imagination, he could ever have been brought back and fixed by any lasting attachment. Actual objects there were, in but too great number, who, as long as the illusion continued, kindled up his thoughts and were the themes of his song. But they were, after all, little more than mere dreams of the hour;—the qualities with which he invested them were almost all ideal, nor could have stood the test of a month's, or even week's, cohabitation. It was but the reflection of his own bright conceptions that he saw in each new object; and while persuading himself that they furnished the models of his heroines, he was, on the contrary, but fancying that he beheld his heroines in them.

There needs no stronger proof of the predominance of imagination in these attachments than his own serious avowal, in the Journal already given, that often, when in the company of the woman he most loved, he found himself secretly wishing for the solitude of his own study. It was *there*, indeed,—in the silence and abstraction of that study,—that the chief scene of his mistress's empire and glory lay. It was there that, unchecked by reality, and without any fear of the disenchantments of truth, he could view her through the medium of his own fer-

vid fancy, enamour himself of an idol of his own creating, and out of a brief delirium of a few days or weeks, send forth a dream of beauty and passion through all ages.

While such appears to have been the imaginative character of his loves, (of all, except the one that lived unquenched through all,) his friendships, though, of course, far less subject to the influence of fancy, could not fail to exhibit also some features characteristic of the peculiar mind in which they sprung. It was a usual saying of his own, and will be found repeated in some of his letters, that he had "no genius for friendship," and that whatever capacity he might once have possessed for that sentiment had vanished with his youth. If in saying thus he shaped his notions of friendship according to the romantic standard of his boyhood, the fact must be admitted: but as far as the assertion was meant to imply that he had become incapable of a warm, manly, and lasting friendship, such a charge against himself was unjust, and I am not the only living testimony of its injustice.

To a certain degree, however, even in his friendships, the effects of a too vivid imagination, in disqualifying the mind for the cold contact of reality, were visible. We are told that Petrarch (who, in this respect, as in most others, may be regarded as a genuine representative of the poetic character,) abstained purposely from a too frequent intercourse with his nearest friends, lest, from the sensitiveness he was so aware of in himself, there should occur

any thing that might chill his regard for them *; and though Lord Byron was of a nature too full of social and kindly impulses ever to think of such a precaution, it is a fact confirmatory, at least, of the principle on which his brother poet, Petrarch, acted, that the friends, whether of his youth or manhood, of whom he had seen least, through life, were those of whom he always thought and spoke with the most warmth and fondness. Being brought less often to the touchstone of familiar intercourse, they stood naturally a better chance of being adopted as the favourites of his imagination, and of sharing, in consequence, a portion of that bright colouring reserved for all that gave it interest and pleasure. Next to the dead, therefore, whose hold upon his fancy had been placed beyond all risk of severance, those friends whom he but saw occasionally, and by such favourable glimpses as only renewed the first kindly impression they had made, were the surest to live unchangingly, and without shadow, in his memory.

To this same cause, there is little doubt, his love for his sister owed much of its devotedness and fervour. In a mind sensitive and versatile as his, long habits of family intercourse might have estranged, or at least dulled, his natural affection for her;—but their separation, during youth, left this feeling

* See Foscolo's Essay on Petrarch. On the same principle, Orrery says, in speaking of Swift, "I am persuaded that his distance from his English friends proved a strong incitement to their mutual affection."

fresh and untried.* His very inexperience in such ties made the smile of a sister no less a novelty than a charm to him; and before the first gloss of this newly awakened sentiment had time to wear off, they were again separated, and for ever.

If the portrait which I have here attempted of the general character of those gifted with high genius be allowed to bear, in any of its features, a resemblance to the originals, it can no longer, I think, be matter of question whether a class so set apart from the track of ordinary life, so removed, by their very elevation, out of the influences of our common atmosphere, are at all likely to furnish tractable subjects for that most trying of all social experiments, matrimony. In reviewing the great names of philosophy and science, we shall find that all who have most distinguished themselves in those walks have, at least, virtually admitted their own unfitness for the marriage tie by remaining in celibacy; — Newton, Gassendi, Galileo, Descartes, Bayle, Locke, Leibnitz, Boyle, Hume, and a long list of other illustrious sages, having all led single lives. †

* That he was himself fully aware of this appears from a passage in one of his letters already given: — "My sister is in town, which is a great comfort; for, never having been much together, we are naturally more attached to each other."

† Wife and children, Bacon tells us in one of his Essays, are "impediments to great enterprises;" and adds, "Certainly, the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men." See, with reference to this subject, chapter xviii. of Mr. D'Israeli's work on "The Literary Character."

The poetic race, it is true, from the greater susceptibility of their imaginations, have more frequently fallen into the ever ready snare. But the fate of the poets in matrimony has but justified the caution of the philosophers. While the latter have given warning to genius by keeping free of the yoke, the others have still more effectually done so by their misery under it; — the annals of this sensitive race having, at all times, abounded with proofs, that genius ranks but low among the elements of social happiness, — that, in general, the brighter the gift, the more disturbing its influence, and that in married life particularly, its effects have been too often like that of the "Wormwood Star," whose light filled the waters on which it fell with bitterness.

Besides the causes already enumerated as leading naturally to such a result, from the peculiarities by which, in most instances, these great labourers in the field of thought are characterised, there is also much, no doubt, to be attributed to an unluckiness in the choice of helpmates, — dictated, as that choice frequently must be, by an imagination accustomed to deceive itself. But from whatever causes it may have arisen, the coincidence is no less striking than saddening, that, on the list of married poets who have been unhappy in their homes, there should already be found four such illustrious names as Dante, Milton *, Shaks-

* Milton's first wife, it is well known, ran away from him, within a month after their marriage, disgusted, says Phillips, "with his spare diet and hard study;" and it is difficult to conceive a more melancholy picture of domestic life than is

peare *, and Dryden; and that we should now have to add, as a partner in their destiny, a name worthy of being placed beside the greatest of them, — Lord Byron.

I have already mentioned my having been called up to town in the December of this year. The opportunities I had of seeing Lord Byron during my stay were frequent; and, among them, not the least memorable or agreeable were those evenings we passed together at the house of his banker, Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, where music, — followed by its accustomed sequel of supper, brandy and water, and

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disclosed in his nuncupative will, one of the witnesses to which deposes to having heard the great poet himself complain, that his children "were careless of him, being blind, and made nothing of deserting him."

* By whatever austerity of temper or habits the poets Dante and Milton may have drawn upon themselves such a fate, it might be expected that, at least, the "gentle Shakspeare" would have stood exempt from the common calamity of his brethren. But, among the very few facts of his life that have been transmitted to us, there is none more clearly proved than the unhappiness of his marriage. The dates of the birth of his children, compared with that of his removal from Stratford, — the total omission of his wife's name in the first draft of his will, and the bitter sarcasm of the bequest by which he remembers her afterwards, — all prove beyond a doubt both his separation from the lady early in life, and his unfriendly feeling towards her at the close of it.

In endeavouring to argue against the conclusion naturally to be deduced from this will, Boswell, with a strange ignorance of human nature, remarks: — "If he had taken offence at any part of his wife's conduct, I cannot believe that he would have taken this petty mode of expressing it."

not a little laughter, — kept us together, usually, till rather a late hour. Besides those songs of mine which he has himself somewhere recorded as his favourites, there was also one to a Portuguese air, " The song of war shall echo through our mountains," which seemed especially to please him; — the national character of the music, and the recurrence of the words " sunny mountains," bringing back freshly to his memory the impressions of all he had seen in Portugal. I have, indeed, known few persons more alive to the charms of simple music; and not unfrequently have seen the tears in his eyes while listening to the Irish Melodies. Among those that thus affected him was one beginning " When first I met thee warm and young," the words of which, besides the obvious feeling which they express, were intended also to admit of a political application. He, however, discarded the latter sense wholly from his mind, and gave himself up to the more natural sentiment of the song with evident emotion.

On one or two of these evenings, his favourite actor, Mr. Kean, was of the party; and on another occasion, we had at dinner his early instructor in pugilism, Mr. Jackson, in conversing with whom, all his boyish tastes seemed to revive; — and it was not a little amusing to observe how perfectly familiar with the annals of " The Ring *," and with all the most

* In a small book which I have in my possession, containing a sort of chronological History of the Ring, I find the name of Lord Byron, more than once, recorded among the " backers."

recondite phraseology of "the Fancy," was the sublime poet of Childe Harold.

The following note is the only one, of those I received from him at this time, worth transcribing:—

"December 14. 1814.

"My dearest Tom,

"I will send the pattern to-morrow, and since you don't go to our friend ('of the *keeping* part of the town') this evening, I shall e'en sulk at home over a solitary potation. My self-opinion rises much by your eulogy of my social qualities. As my friend Scrope is pleased to say, I believe I am very well for a 'holiday drinker.' Where the devil are you? With Woolridge *, I conjecture — for which you deserve another abscess. Hoping that the American war will last for many years, and that all the prizes may be registered at Bermoothes, believe me, &c.

"P. S. I have just been composing an epistle to the Archbishop for an especial licence. Oons! it looks serious. Murray is impatient to see you, and would call, if you will give him audience. Your new coat! — I wonder you like the colour, and don't go about, like Dives, in purple."

LETTER 207. TO MR. MURRAY.

"December 31. 1814.

"A thousand thanks for Gibbon: all the additions are very great improvements.

* Dr. Woolriche, an old and valued friend of mine, to whose skill, on the occasion here alluded to, I was indebted for my life.

"At last I must be *most* peremptory with you about the *print* from Phillips's picture: it is pronounced on all hands the most stupid and disagreeable possible: so do, pray, have a new engraving, and let me see it first; there really must be no more from the same plate. I don't much care, myself; but every one I honour torments me to death about it, and abuses it to a degree beyond repeating. Now, don't answer with excuses; but, for my sake, have it destroyed: I never shall have peace till it is. I write in the greatest haste.

"P. S. I have written this most illegibly; but it is to beg you to destroy the print, and have another 'by particular desire.' It must be d—d bad, to be sure, since every body says so but the original; and he don't know what to say. But do *do* it: that is, burn the plate, and employ a new *etcher* from the other picture. This is stupid and sulky."

On his arrival in town, he had, upon enquiring into the state of his affairs, found them in so utterly embarrassed a condition as to fill him with some alarm, and even to suggest to his mind the prudence of deferring his marriage. The die was, however, cast, and he had now no alternative but to proceed. Accordingly, at the end of December, accompanied by his friend Mr. Hobhouse, he set out for Seaham, the seat of Sir Ralph Milbanke, the lady's father, in the county of Durham, and on the 2d of January, 1815, was married.

" I saw him stand
Before an altar with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood; — as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then —
As in that hour — a moment o'er his face,
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, — and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been —
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her, who was his destiny, came back,
And thrust themselves between him and the light: —
What business had they there at such a time? " *

This touching picture agrees so closely in many of its circumstances, with his own prose account of the wedding in his Memoranda, that I feel justified in introducing it, historically, here. In that Memoir, he described himself as waking, on the morning of his marriage, with the most melancholy reflections, on seeing his wedding-suit spread out before him. In the same mood, he wandered about the grounds alone, till he was summoned for the ceremony, and joined, for the first time on that day, his bride and her family. He knelt down, he repeated the words

* The Dream.

after the clergyman; but a mist was before his eyes, — his thoughts were elsewhere; and he was but awakened by the congratulations of the bystanders, to find that he was — married.

The same morning, the wedded pair left Seaham for Halnaby, another seat of Sir Ralph Milbanke, in the same county. When about to depart, Lord Byron said to the bride, "Miss Milbanke, are you ready?" — a mistake which the lady's confidential attendant pronounced to be a "bad omen."

It is right to add, that I quote these slight details from memory, and am alone answerable for any inaccuracy there may be found in them.

LETTER 208. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Kirkby, January 6. 1815.

"*The* marriage took place on the 2d instant: so pray make haste and congratulate away.

"Thanks for the Edinburgh Review and the abolition of the print. Let the next be from the *other* of Phillips — I mean (*not* the Albanian, but) the original one in the exhibition; the last was from the copy. I should wish my sister and Lady Byron to decide upon the next, as they found fault with the last. *I* have no opinion of my own upon the subject.

"Mr. Kinnaird will, I dare say, have the goodness to furnish copies of the Melodies*, if you state my wish upon the subject. You may have them, if you

* The Hebrew Melodies which he had employed himself in writing, during his recent stay in London.

think them worth inserting. The volumes in their collected state must be inscribed to Mr. Hobhouse, but I have not yet mustered the expressions of my inscription; but will supply them in time.

"With many thanks for your good wishes, which have all been realised, I remain, very truly, yours,

"BYRON."

LETTER 209. TO MR. MOORE.

"Halnaby, Darlington, January 10. 1815.

"I was married this day week. The parson has pronounced it — Perry has announced it — and the Morning Post, also, under the head of 'Lord Byron's Marriage' — as if it were a fabrication, or the puff-direct of a new stay-maker.

"Now for thine affairs. I have redde thee upon the Fathers, and it is excellent well. Positively, you must not leave off reviewing. You shine in it — you kill in it; and this article has been taken for Sydney Smith's (as I heard in town), which proves not only your proficiency in parsonology, but that you have all the airs of a veteran critic at your first onset. So, prithee, go on and prosper.

"Scott's 'Lord of the Isles' is out — 'the mail-coach copy' I have, by special licence, of Murray.

"Now is *your* time; — you will come upon them newly and freshly. It is impossible to read what you have lately done (verse or prose) without seeing that you have trained on tenfold. * * has floundered; * * has foundered. *I* have tried the rascals (*i. e.* the public) with my Harrys and Larrys, Pilgrims and Pirates. Nobody but S * * * *y has done any

thing worth a slice of bookseller's pudding; and *he* has not luck enough to be found out in doing a good thing. Now, Tom, is thy time — 'Oh joyful day!—I would not take a knighthood for thy fortune.' Let me hear from you soon, and believe me ever, &c.

"P. S. Lady Byron is vastly well. How are Mrs. Moore and Joe Atkinson's 'Graces?' We must present our women to one another."

LETTER 210. TO MR. MOORE.

"January 19. 1815.

"Egad! I don't think he is 'down;' and my prophecy — like most auguries, sacred and profane — is not annulled, but inverted.

"To your question about the 'dog'* — Umph! — my 'mother,' I won't say any thing against — that is, about her: but how long a 'mistress' or friend may recollect paramours or competitors (lust and thirst being the two great and only bonds between the amatory or the amicable) I can't say, — or, rather, you know, as well as I could tell you.

* I had just been reading Mr. Southey's fine poem of "Roderick;" and with reference to an incident in it, had put the following question to Lord Byron: — "I should like to know from *you*, who are one of the philocynic sect, whether it is probable, that any dog (out of a melodrame) could recognise a master, whom neither his own mother or mistress was able to find out. I don't care about Ulysses's dog, &c. — all I want is to know from *you* (who are renowned as 'friend of the dog, companion of the bear') whether such a thing is probable."

But as for canine recollections, as far as I could judge by a cur of mine own, (always bating Boatswain, the dearest and, alas! the maddest of dogs,) I had one (half a *wolf* by the she side) that doted on me at ten years old, and very nearly ate me at twenty. When I thought he was going to enact Argus, he bit away the backside of my breeches, and never would consent to any kind of recognition, in despite of all kinds of bones which I offered him. So, let Southey blush and Homer too, as far as I can decide upon quadruped memories.

" I humbly take it, the mother knows the son that pays her jointure — a mistress her mate, till he * * and refuses salary — a friend his fellow, till he loses cash and character — and a dog his master, till he changes him.

" So, you want to know about milady and me? But let me not, as Roderick Random says, ' profane the chaste mysteries of Hymen '* — damn the word, I had nearly spelt it with a small *h*. I like Bell as well as you do (or did, you villain!) Bessy — and that is (or was) saying a great deal.

" Address your next to Seaham, Stockton-on-Tees, where we are going on Saturday (a bore, by the way,) to see father-in-law, Sir Jacob, and my lady's lady-mother. Write — and write more at length — both to the public and yours ever most affectionately,

" B."

* The letter H. is blotted in the MS.

LETTER 211. TO MR. MOORE.

" Seaham, Stockton-on-Tees, February 2. 1815.

" I have heard from London that you have left Chatsworth and all the women full of 'entusymusy'* about you, personally and poetically; and, in particular, that 'When first I met thee' has been quite overwhelming in its effect. I told you it was one of the best things you ever wrote, though that dog Power wanted you to omit part of it. They are all regretting your absence at Chatsworth, according to my informant — 'all the ladies quite,' &c. &c. &c. Stap my vitals!

" Well, now you have got home again — which I dare say is as agreeable as a 'draught of cool small beer to the scorched palate of a waking sot' — now you have got home again, I say, probably I shall hear from you. Since I wrote last, I have been transferred to my father-in-law's, with my lady and my lady's maid, &c. &c. &c. and the treacle-moon is over, and I am awake, and find myself married. My spouse and I agree to — and in — admiration. Swift says 'no *wise* man ever married;' but, for a fool, I think it the most ambrosial of all possible future states. I still think one ought to marry upon *lease;* but am very sure I should renew mine at the expiration, though next term were for ninety and nine years.

" I wish you would respond, for I am here 'oblitusque meorum obliviscendus et illis.' Pray

* It was thus that, according to his account, a certain celebrated singer and actor used frequently to pronounce the word " enthusiasm."

tell me what is going on in the way of intriguery, and how the w——s and rogues of the upper Beggar's Opera go on — or rather go off — in or after marriage; or who are going to break any particular commandment. Upon this dreary coast, we have nothing but county meetings and shipwrecks; and I have this day dined upon fish, which probably dined upon the crews of several colliers lost in the late gales. But I saw the sea once more in all the glories of surf and foam,—almost equal to the Bay of Biscay, and the interesting white squalls and short seas of Archipelago memory.

"My papa, Sir Ralpho, hath recently made a speech at a Durham tax-meeting; and not only at Durham, but here, several times since, after dinner. He is now, I believe, speaking it to himself (I left him in the middle) over various decanters, which can neither interrupt him nor fall asleep, — as might possibly have been the case with some of his audience. Ever thine, B.

"I must go to tea — damn tea. I wish it was Kinnaird's brandy, and with you to lecture me about it."

LETTER 212. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Seaham, Stockton-upon-Tees, February 2. 1815.

"You will oblige me very much by making an occasional enquiry at Albany, at my chambers, whether my books, &c. are kept in tolerable order, and how far my old woman * continues in health and

* Mrs. Mule.

industry as keeper of my old den. Your parcels have been duly received and perused; but I had hoped to receive 'Guy Mannering' before this time. I won't intrude further for the present on your avocations, professional or pleasurable, but am, as usual,

"Very truly," &c.

LETTER 213. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 4. 1815.

"I enclose you half a letter from * *, which will explain itself—at least the latter part—the former refers to private business of mine own. If Jeffrey will take such an article, and you will undertake the revision, or, indeed, any portion of the article itself, (for unless *you do*, by Phœbus, I will have nothing to do with it,) we can cook up, between us three, as pretty a dish of sour-crout as ever tipped over the tongue of a bookmaker.

"You can, at any rate, try Jeffrey's inclination. Your late proposal from him made me hint this to * *, who is a much better proser and scholar than I am, and a very superior man indeed. Excuse haste—answer this. Ever yours most,

"B.

"P. S. All is well at home. I wrote to you yesterday."

LETTER 214. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 10. 1815.

"My dear Tom,

"Jeffrey has been so very kind about me and my damnable works, that I would not be indirect or

equivocal with him, even for a friend. So, it may be as well to tell him that it is not mine; but that if I did not firmly and truly believe it to be much better than I could offer, I would never have troubled him or you about it. You can judge between you how far it is admissible, and reject it, if not of the right sort. For my own part, I have no interest in the article one way or the other, further than to oblige * *; and should the composition be a good one, it can hurt neither party,—nor, indeed, any one, saving and excepting Mr. * * * *.

" Curse catch me if I know what H * * means or meaned about the demonstrative pronoun *, but I admire your fear of being inoculated with the same. Have you never found out that you have a particular style of your own, which is as distinct from all other people, as Hafiz of Shiraz from Hafiz of the Morning Post?

" So you allowed B * * and such like to hum and haw you, or, rather, Lady J * * out of her compliment, and *me* out of mine.† Sun-burn me, but this was pitiful-hearted. However, I will tell her all about it when I see her.

" Bell desires me to say all kinds of civilities, and assure you of her recognition and high consideration. I will tell you of our movements south, which may

* Some remark which he told me had been made with respect to the frequent use of the demonstrative pronoun both by himself and by Sir W. Scott.

† Verses to Lady J * * (containing an allusion to Lord Byron), which I had written, while at Chatsworth, but consigned afterwards to the flames.

be in about three weeks from this present writing. By the way, don't engage yourself in any travelling expedition, as I have a plan of travel into Italy, which we will discuss. And then, think of the poesy wherewithal we should overflow, from Venice to Vesuvius, to say nothing of Greece, through all which — God willing — we might perambulate in one twelve months. If I take my wife, you can take yours; and if I leave mine, you may do the same. 'Mind you stand by me in either case, Brother Bruin.'

"And believe me inveterately yours,

"B.

LETTER 215. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 22. 1815.

"Yesterday I sent off the packet and letter to Edinburgh. It consisted of forty-one pages, so that I have not added a line; but in my letter, I mentioned what passed between you and me in autumn, as my inducement for presuming to trouble him either with my own or * * 's lucubrations. I am any thing but sure that it will do; but I have told J. that if there is any decent raw material in it, he may cut it into what shape he pleases, and warp it to his liking.

"So you *won't* go abroad, then, with *me*,—but alone. I fully purpose starting much about the time you mention, and alone, too.

"I hope J. won't think me very impudent in sending * * only: there was not room for a syllable. I have avowed * * as the author, and said that you

thought or said, when I met you last, that he (J.) would not be angry at the coalition, (though, alas! we have not coalesced,) and so, if I have got into a scrape, I must get out of it — Heaven knows how.

"Your Anacreon * is come, and with it I sealed (its first impression) the packet and epistle to our patron.

"Curse the Melodies and the Tribes, to boot. † Braham is to assist — or hath assisted — but will do no more good than a second physician. I merely interfered to oblige a whim of K.'s, and all I have got by it was 'a speech' and a receipt for stewed oysters.

"'Not meet' — pray don't say so. We must meet somewhere or somehow. Newstead is out of the question, being nearly sold again, or, if not, it is uninhabitable for my spouse. Pray write again. I will soon.

"P. S. Pray when do you come out? ever, or never? I hope I have made no blunder; but I certainly think you said to me, (after W * * th, whom I first pondered upon, was given up,) that * * and I might attempt * * * *. *His* length alone prevented me from trying my part, though I should have been less severe upon the Reviewée.

"Your seal is the best and prettiest of my set, and I thank you very much therefor. I have just been — or rather, ought to be — very much shocked by the

* A seal, with the head of Anacreon, which I had given him.

† I had taken the liberty of laughing a little at the manner in which some of his Hebrew Melodies had been set to music.

death of the Duke of Dorset. We were at school together, and there I was passionately attached to him. Since, we have never met — but once, I think, since 1805 — and it would be a paltry affectation to pretend that I had any feeling for him worth the name. But there was a time in my life when this event would have broken my heart; and all I can say for it now is that — it is not worth breaking.

"Adieu — it is all a farce."

LETTER 216. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 2. 1815.

"My dear Thom,

"Jeffrey has sent me the most friendly of all possible letters, and has accepted * *'s article. He says he has long liked not only, &c. &c. but my 'character.' This must be *your* doing, you dog — ar'nt you ashamed of yourself, knowing me so well? This is what one gets for having you for a father confessor.

"I feel merry enough to send you a sad song.* You once asked me for some words which you would set. Now you may set or not, as you like,— but there they are, in a legible hand†, and not in mine, but of my own scribbling; so you may say of them what you please. Why don't you write to me?

* The verses enclosed were those melancholy ones, now printed in his works, "There's not a joy the world can give like those it takes away."

† The MS. was in the handwriting of Lady Byron.

I shall make you 'a speech'* if you don't respond quickly.

"I am in such a state of sameness and stagnation, and so totally occupied in consuming the fruits — and sauntering — and playing dull games at cards — and yawning — and trying to read old Annual Registers and the daily papers — and gathering shells on the shore — and watching the growth of stunted gooseberry bushes in the garden — that I have neither time nor sense to say more than yours ever, B.

"P. S. I open my letter again to put a question to you. What would Lady C——k, or any other fashionable Pidcock, give to collect you and Jeffrey and me to *one* party? I have been answering his letter, which suggested this dainty query. I can't help laughing at the thoughts of your face and mine; and our anxiety to keep the Aristarch in good humour during the *early* part of a compotation, till we got drunk enough to make him 'a speech.' I think the critic would have much the best of us — of one, at least — for I don't think diffidence (I mean social) is a disease of yours."

* These allusions to "a speech" are connected with a little incident, not worth mentioning, which had amused us both when I was in town. He was rather fond (and had been always so, as may be seen in his early letters,) of thus harping on some conventional phrase or joke.

LETTER 217. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 8. 1815.

"An event — the death of poor Dorset — and the recollection of what I once felt, and ought to have felt now, but could not — set me pondering, and finally into the train of thought which you have in your hands. I am very glad you like them, for I flatter myself they will pass as an imitation of your style. If I could imitate it well, I should have no great ambition of originality — I wish I could make you exclaim with Dennis, 'That's my thunder, by G—d!' I wrote them with a view to your setting them, and as a present to Power, if he would accept the words, and *you* did not think yourself degraded, for once in a way, by marrying them to music.

"Sun-burn N * *! — why do you always twit me with his vile Ebrew nasalities? Have I not told you it was all K.'s doing, and my own exquisite facility of temper? But thou wilt be a wag, Thomas; and see what you get for it. Now for my revenge.

"Depend — and perpend — upon it that your opinion of * *'s poem will travel through one or other of the quintuple correspondents, till it reaches the ear, and the liver of the author.* Your adven-

* He here alludes to a circumstance which I had communicated to him in a preceding letter. In writing to one of the numerous partners of a well-known publishing establishment (with which I have since been lucky enough to form a more intimate connection), I had said confidentially (as I thought), in reference to a poem that had just appeared, — "Between you and me, I do not much admire Mr. * *'s poem." The

ture, however, is truly laughable — but how could you be such a potatoe? You 'a brother' (of the quill) too, 'near the throne,' to confide to a man's *own publisher* (who has 'bought,' or rather sold, 'golden opinions' about him) such a damnatory parenthesis! 'Between you and me,' quotha — it reminds me of a passage in the Heir at Law — 'Tête-à-tête with Lady Duberly, I suppose.' — 'No — tête-à-tête with *five hundred people;*' and your confidential communication will doubtless be in circulation to that amount, in a short time, with several additions, and in several letters, all signed L. H. R. O. B., &c. &c. &c.

"We leave this place to-morrow, and shall stop on our way to town (in the interval of taking a house there) at Col. Leigh's, near Newmarket, where any epistle of yours will find its welcome way.

"I have been very comfortable here, — listening to that d—d monologue, which elderly gentlemen call conversation, and in which my pious father-in-law repeats himself every evening — save one, when he played upon the fiddle. However, they have been very kind and hospitable, and I like them and the place vastly, and I hope they will live many happy months. Bell is in health, and unvaried good-humour and behaviour. But we are all in the

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letter being chiefly upon business, was answered through the regular business channel, and, to my dismay, concluded with the following words: — "*We* are very sorry that you do not approve of Mr. * *'s new poem, and are your obedient, &c. &c. L. H. R. O., &c. &c."

agonies of packing and parting; and I suppose by this time to-morrow I shall be stuck in the chariot with my chin upon a band-box. I have prepared, however, another carriage for the abigail, and all the trumpery which our wives drag along with them.

"Ever thine, most affectionately,

"B."

LETTER 218. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 17. 1815.

"I meaned to write to you before on the subject of your loss*; but the recollection of the uselessness and worthlessness of any observations on such events prevented me. I shall only now add, that I rejoice to see you bear it so well, and that I trust time will enable Mrs. M. to sustain it better. Every thing should be done to divert and occupy her with other thoughts and cares, and I am sure that all that can be done will.

"Now to your letter. Napoleon — but the papers will have told you all. I quite think with you upon the subject, and for my *real* thoughts this time last year, I would refer you to the last pages of the Journal I gave you. I can forgive the rogue for utterly falsifying every line of mine Ode — which I take to be the last and uttermost stretch of human magnanimity. Do you remember the story of a certain Abbé, who wrote a treatise on the Swedish Constitution, and proved it indissoluble and eternal?

* The death of his infant god-daughter, Olivia Byron Moore.

Just as he had corrected the last sheet, news came that Gustavus III. had destroyed this immortal government. 'Sir,' quoth the Abbé, 'the King of Sweden may overthrow the *constitution*, but not *my book ! !*' I think *of* the Abbé, but not *with* him.

"Making every allowance for talent and most consummate daring, there is, after all, a good deal in luck or destiny. He might have been stopped by our frigates — or wrecked in the Gulf of Lyons, which is particularly tempestuous — or — a thousand things. But he is certainly Fortune's favourite, and

> Once fairly set out on his party of pleasure,
> Taking towns at his liking and crowns at his leisure,
> From Elba to Lyons and Paris he goes,
> Making *balls for* the ladies, and *bows* to his foes.

You must have seen the account of his driving into the middle of the royal army, and the immediate effect of his pretty speeches. And now if he don't drub the allies, there is 'no purchase in money.' If he can take France by himself, the devil's in 't if he don't repulse the invaders, when backed by those celebrated sworders — those boys of the blade, the Imperial Guard, and the old and new army. It is impossible not to be dazzled and overwhelmed by his character and career. Nothing ever so disappointed me as his abdication, and nothing could have reconciled me to him but some such revival as his recent exploit; though no one could anticipate such a complete and brilliant renovation.

"To your question, I can only answer that there have been some symptoms which look a little gestatory. It is a subject upon which I am not particular-

ly anxious, except that I think it would please her uncle, Lord Wentworth, and her father and mother. The former (Lord W.) is now in town, and in very indifferent health. You, perhaps, know that his property, amounting to seven or eight thousand a year, will eventually devolve upon Bell. But the old gentleman has been so very kind to her and me, that I hardly know how to wish him in heaven, if he can be comfortable on earth. Her father is still in the country.

"We mean to metropolise to-morrow, and you will address your next to Piccadilly. We have got the Duchess of Devon's house there, she being in France.

"I don't care what Power says to secure the property of the Song, so that it is *not* complimentary to me, nor any thing about 'condescending' or '*noble* author'—both 'vile phrases,' as Polonius says.

"Pray, let me hear from you, and when you mean to be in town. Your continental scheme is impracticable for the present. I have to thank you for a longer letter than usual, which I hope will induce you to tax my gratitude still further in the same way.

"You never told me about 'Longman' and 'next winter,' and I am *not* a 'mile-stone.' "*

* I had accused him of having entirely forgot that, in a preceding letter, I had informed him of my intention to publish with the Messrs. Longman in the ensuing winter, and added that, in giving him this information, I found I had been — to use an elegant Irish metaphor — "whistling jigs to a mile-stone."

LETTER 219. TO MR. COLERIDGE.

" Piccadilly, March 31. 1815.

" Dear Sir,

" It will give me great pleasure to comply with your request, though I hope there is still taste enough left amongst us to render it almost unnecessary, sordid and interested as, it must be admitted, many of 'the trade' are, where circumstances give them an advantage. I trust you do not permit yourself to be depressed by the temporary partiality of what is called 'the public' for the favourites of the moment; all experience is against the permanency of such impressions. You must have lived to see many of these pass away, and will survive many more — I mean personally, for *poetically*, I would not insult you by a comparison.

" If I may be permitted, I would suggest that there never was such an opening for tragedy. In Kean, there is an actor worthy of expressing the thoughts of the characters which you have every power of embodying; and I cannot but regret that the part of Ordonio was disposed of before his appearance at Drury Lane. We have had nothing to be mentioned in the same breath with 'Remorse' for very many years; and I should think that the reception of that play was sufficient to encourage the highest hopes of author and audience. It is to be hoped that you are proceeding in a career which could not but be successful. With my best respects to Mr. Bowles, I have the honour to be

" Your obliged and very obedient servant,

" BYRON.

"P. S. You mention my 'Satire,' lampoon, or whatever you or others please to call it. I can only say, that it was written when I was very young and very angry, and has been a thorn in my side ever since; more particularly as almost all the persons animadverted upon became subsequently my acquaintances, and some of them my friends, which is 'heaping fire upon an enemy's head,' and forgiving me too readily to permit me to forgive myself. The part applied to you is pert, and petulant, and shallow enough; but, although I have long done every thing in my power to suppress the circulation of the whole thing, I shall always regret the wantonness or generality of many of its attempted attacks."

It was in the course of this spring that Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott became, for the first time, personally acquainted with each other. Mr. Murray, having been previously on a visit to the latter gentleman, had been intrusted by him with a superb Turkish dagger as a present to Lord Byron; and the noble poet, on their meeting this year in London, — the only time when these two great men had ever an opportunity of enjoying each other's society, — presented to Sir Walter, in return, a vase containing some human bones that had been dug up from under a part of the old walls of Athens. The reader, however, will be much better pleased to have these particulars in the words of Sir Walter Scott himself, who, with that good-nature which renders him no less amiable than he is admirable, has found time, in the midst of all his marvellous

labours for the world, to favour me with the following interesting communication : * —

" My first acquaintance with Byron began in a manner rather doubtful. I was so far from having

* A few passages at the beginning of these recollections have been omitted, as containing particulars relative to Lord Byron's mother, which have already been mentioned in the early part of this work. Among these, however, there is one anecdote, the repetition of which will be easily pardoned, on account of the infinitely greater interest as well as authenticity imparted to its details by coming from such an eye-witness as Sir Walter Scott : — " I remember," he says, " having seen Lord Byron's mother before she was married, and a certain coincidence rendered the circumstance rather remarkable. It was during Mrs. Siddons's first or second visit to Edinburgh, when the music of that wonderful actress's voice, looks, manner, and person, produced the strongest effect which could possibly be exerted by a human being upon her fellow-creatures. Nothing of the kind that I ever witnessed approached it by a hundred degrees. The high state of excitation was aided by the difficulties of obtaining entrance and the exhausting length of time that the audience were contented to wait until the piece commenced. When the curtain fell, a large proportion of the ladies were generally in hysterics.

" I remember Miss Gordon of Ghight, in particular, harrowing the house by the desperate and wild way in which she shrieked out Mrs. Siddons's exclamation, in the character of Isabella, ' Oh my Byron ! Oh my Byron ! ' A well-known medical gentleman, the benevolent Dr. Alexander Wood, tendered his assistance ; but the thick-pressed audience could not for a long time make way for the doctor to approach his patient, or the patient the physician. The remarkable circumstance was, that the lady had not then seen Captain Byron, who, like Sir Toby, made her conclude with ' Oh ! ' as she had begun with it."

any thing to do with the offensive criticism in the Edinburgh, that I remember remonstrating against it with our friend, the editor, because I thought the 'Hours of Idleness' treated with undue severity. They were written, like all juvenile poetry, rather from the recollection of what had pleased the author in others than what had been suggested by his own imagination; but, nevertheless, I thought they contained some passages of noble promise. I was so much impressed with this, that I had thoughts of writing to the author; but some exaggerated reports concerning his peculiarities, and a natural unwillingness to intrude an opinion which was uncalled for, induced me to relinquish the idea.

"When Byron wrote his famous Satire, I had my share of flagellation among my betters. My crime was having written a poem (Marmion, I think) for a thousand pounds; which was no otherwise true than that I sold the copy-right for that sum. Now, not to mention that an author can hardly be censured for accepting such a sum as the booksellers are willing to give him, especially as the gentlemen of the trade made no complaints of their bargain, I thought the interference with my private affairs was rather beyond the limits of literary satire. On the other hand, Lord Byron paid me, in several passages, so much more praise than I deserved, that I must have been more irritable than I have ever felt upon such subjects, not to sit down contented, and think no more about the matter.

"I was very much struck, with all the rest of the world, at the vigour and force of imagination dis-

played in the first Cantos of Childe Harold, and the other splendid productions which Lord Byron flung from him to the public with a promptitude that savoured of profusion. My own popularity, as a poet, was then on the wane, and I was unaffectedly pleased to see an author of so much power and energy taking the field. Mr. John Murray happened to be in Scotland that season, and as I mentioned to him the pleasure I should have in making Lord Byron's acquaintance, he had the kindness to mention my wish to his Lordship, which led to some correspondence.

" It was in the spring of 1815 that, chancing to be in London, I had the advantage of a personal introduction to Lord Byron. Report had prepared me to meet a man of peculiar habits and a quick temper, and I had some doubts whether we were likely to suit each other in society. I was most agreeably disappointed in this respect. I found Lord Byron in the highest degree courteous, and even kind. We met, for an hour or two almost daily, in Mr. Murray's drawing-room, and found a great deal to say to each other. We also met frequently in parties and evening society, so that for about two months I had the advantage of a considerable intimacy with this distinguished individual. Our sentiments agreed a good deal, except upon the subjects of religion and politics, upon neither of which I was inclined to believe that Lord Byron entertained very fixed opinions. I remember saying to him, that I really thought, that if he lived a few years he would alter his sentiments. He answered, rather sharply, 'I suppose you are

one of those who prophesy I will turn Methodist.' I replied, 'No — I don't expect your conversion to be of such an ordinary kind. I would rather look to see you retreat upon the Catholic faith, and distinguish yourself by the austerity of your penances. The species of religion to which you must, or may, one day attach yourself must exercise a strong power on the imagination.' He smiled gravely, and seemed to allow I might be right.

"On politics, he used sometimes to express a high strain of what is now called Liberalism; but it appeared to me that the pleasure it afforded him as a vehicle of displaying his wit and satire against individuals in office was at the bottom of this habit of thinking, rather than any real conviction of the political principles on which he talked. He was certainly proud of his rank and ancient family, and, in that respect, as much an aristocrat as was consistent with good sense and good breeding. Some disgusts, how adopted I know not, seemed to me to have given this peculiar and, as it appeared to me, contradictory cast of mind: but, at heart, I would have termed Byron a patrician on principle.

"Lord Byron's reading did not seem to me to have been very extensive either in poetry or history. Having the advantage of him in that respect, and possessing a good competent share of such reading as is little read, I was sometimes able to put under his eye objects which had for him the interest of novelty. I remember particularly repeating to him the fine poem of Hardyknute, an imitation of the old Scottish Ballad, with which he was so much affected,

that some one who was in the same apartment asked me what I could possibly have been telling Byron by which he was so much agitated.

"I saw Byron, for the last time, in 1815, after I returned from France. He dined, or lunched, with me at Long's in Bond Street. I never saw him so full of gaiety and good-humour, to which the presence of Mr. Mathews, the comedian, added not a little. Poor Terry was also present. After one of the gayest parties I ever was present at, my fellow-traveller, Mr. Scott, of Gala, and I set off for Scotland, and I never saw Lord Byron again. Several letters passed between us — one perhaps every half year. Like the old heroes in Homer, we exchanged gifts: — I gave Byron a beautiful dagger mounted with gold, which had been the property of the redoubted Elfi Bey. But I was to play the part of Diomed, in the Iliad, for Byron sent me, some time after, a large sepulchral vase of silver. It was full of dead men's bones, and had inscriptions on two sides of the base. One ran thus: — 'The bones contained in this urn were found in certain ancient sepulchres within the land walls of Athens, in the month of February, 1811.' The other face bears the lines of Juvenal:

"Expende — quot libras in duce summo invenies.
— Mors sola fatetur quantula hominum corpuscula."
Juv. x.

"To these I have added a third inscription, in these words — 'The gift of Lord Byron to Walter Scott.'*

* Mr. Murray had, at the time of giving the vase, suggested to Lord Byron, that it would increase the value of the

There was a letter with this vase more valuable to me than the gift itself, from the kindness with which the donor expressed himself towards me. I left it naturally in the urn with the bones, — but it is now missing. As the theft was not of a nature to be practised by a mere domestic, I am compelled to suspect the inhospitality of some individual of higher station, — most gratuitously exercised certainly, since, after what I have here said, no one will probably choose to boast of possessing this literary curiosity.

" We had a good deal of laughing, I remember, on what the public might be supposed to think, or say, concerning the gloomy and ominous nature of our mutual gifts.

" I think I can add little more to my recollections of Byron. He was often melancholy, — almost gloomy. When I observed him in this humour, I used either to wait till it went off of its own accord, or till some natural and easy mode occurred of leading him into conversation, when the shadows almost always left his countenance, like the mist rising from a landscape. In conversation he was very animated.

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gift to add some such inscription; but the feeling of the noble poet on this subject will be understood from the following answer which he returned: —

" April 9. 1815.

" Thanks for the books. I have great objection to your proposition about inscribing the vase, — which is, that it would appear *ostentatious* on my part; and of course I must send it as it is, without any alteration.

" Yours," &c.

"I met with him very frequently in society; our mutual acquaintances doing me the honour to think that he liked to meet with me. Some very agreeable parties I can recollect,—particularly one at Sir George Beaumont's, where the amiable landlord had assembled some persons distinguished for talent. Of these I need only mention the late Sir Humphry Davy, whose talents for literature were as remarkable as his empire over science. Mr. Richard Sharpe and Mr. Rogers were also present.

"I think I also remarked in Byron's temper starts of suspicion, when he seemed to pause and consider whether there had not been a secret, and perhaps offensive, meaning in something casually said to him. In this case, I also judged it best to let his mind, like a troubled spring, work itself clear, which it did in a minute or two. I was considerably older, you will recollect, than my noble friend, and had no reason to fear his misconstruing my sentiments towards him, nor had I ever the slightest reason to doubt that they were kindly returned on his part. If I had occasion to be mortified by the display of genius which threw into the shade such pretensions as I was then supposed to possess, I might console myself that, in my own case, the materials of mental happiness had been mingled in a greater proportion.

"I rummage my brains in vain for what often rushes into my head unbidden,—little traits and sayings which recall his looks, manner, tone, and gestures; and I have always continued to think that a crisis of life was arrived in which a new career of fame

was opened to him, and that had he been permitted to start upon it, he would have obliterated the memory of such parts of his life as friends would wish to forget."

LETTER 220. TO MR. MOORE.

" April 23. 1815.

" Lord Wentworth died last week. The bulk of his property (from seven to eight thousand per ann.) is entailed on Lady Milbanke and Lady Byron. The first is gone to take possession in Leicestershire, and attend the funeral, &c. this day.

" I have mentioned the facts of the settlement of Lord W.'s property, because the newspapers, with their usual accuracy, have been making all kinds of blunders in their statement. His will is just as expected—the principal part settled on Lady Milbanke (now Noel) and Bell, and a separate estate left for sale to pay debts (which are not great) and legacies to his natural son and daughter.

" Mrs. **'s tragedy was last night damned. They may bring it on again, and probably will; but damned it was, — not a word of the last act audible. I went (*malgré* that I ought to have stayed at home in sackcloth for unc., but I could not resist the *first* right of any thing) to a private and quiet nook of my private box, and witnessed the whole process. The first three acts, with transient gushes of applause, oozed patiently but heavily on. I must say it was badly acted, particularly by * *, who was groaned upon in the third act, — something about ' horror — such a horror ' was the cause. Well, the fourth

act became as muddy and turbid as need be; but the fifth — what Garrick used to call (like a fool) the *concoction* of a play — the fifth act stuck fast at the King's prayer. You know he says, 'he never went to bed without saying them, and did not like to omit them now.' But he was no sooner upon his knees, than the audience got upon their legs — the damnable pit — and roared, and groaned, and hissed, and whistled. Well, that was choked a little; but the ruffian-scene — the penitent peasantry — and killing the Bishop and Princes — oh, it was all over. The curtain fell upon unheard actors, and the announcement attempted by Kean for Monday was equally ineffectual. Mrs. Bartley was so frightened, that, though the people were tolerably quiet, the epilogue was quite inaudible to half the house. In short, — you know all. I clapped till my hands were skinless, and so did Sir James Mackintosh, who was with me in the box. All the world were in the house, from the Jerseys, Greys, &c. &c. downwards. But it would not do. It is, after all, not an *acting* play; good language, but no power. * * * Women (saving Joanna Baillie) cannot write tragedy: they have not seen enough nor felt enough of life for it. I think Semiramis or Catherine II. might have written (could they have been unqueened) a rare play.

"It is, however, a good warning not to risk or write tragedies. I never had much bent that way; but if I had, this would have cured me.

"Ever, carissime Thom.,

"Thine, B."

LETTER 221. TO MR. MURRAY.

"May 21. 1815.

"You must have thought it very odd, not to say ungrateful, that I made no mention of the drawings *, &c. when I had the pleasure of seeing you this morning. The fact is, that till this moment I had not seen them, nor heard of their arrival: they were carried up into the library, where I have not been till just now, and no intimation given to me of their coming. The present is so very magnificent, that — in short, I leave Lady Byron to thank you for it herself, and merely send this to apologise for a piece of apparent and unintentional neglect on my own part. Yours," &c.

LETTER 222. TO MR. MOORE.†

"13. Piccadilly Terrace, June 12. 1815.

"I have nothing to offer in behalf of my late silence, except the most inveterate and ineffable laziness; but I am too supine to invent a lie, or I *certainly* should, being ashamed of the truth. K**, I hope, has appeased your magnanimous indignation at his blunders. I wished and wish you were in the Committee, with all my heart.‡ It seems so hopeless a business, that the company of a friend

* Mr. Murray had presented Lady Byron with twelve drawings, by Stothard, from Lord Byron's Poems.

† This and the following letter were addressed to me in Ireland, whither I had gone about the middle of the preceding month.

‡ He had lately become one of the members of the Sub-Committee, (consisting, besides himself, of the persons men-

would be quite consoling, — but more of this when we meet. In the mean time, you are entreated to prevail upon Mrs. Esterre to engage herself. I believe she has been written to, but your influence, in person or proxy, would probably go further than our proposals. What they are, I know not; all *my* new function consists in listening to the despair of Cavendish Bradshaw, the hopes of Kinnaird, the wishes of Lord Essex, the complaints of Whitbread, and the calculations of Peter Moore, — all of which, and whom, seem totally at variance. C. Bradshaw wants to light the theatre with *gas*, which may, perhaps (if the vulgar be believed), poison half the audience, and all the *dramatis personæ*. Essex has endeavoured to persuade K * * not to get drunk, the consequence of which is, that he has never been sober since. Kinnaird, with equal success, would have convinced Raymond, that he, the said Raymond, had too much salary. Whitbread wants us to assess the pit another sixpence, — a d—d insidious proposition, — which will end in an O. P. combustion. To crown all, R * *, the auctioneer, has the impudence to be displeased, because he has no dividend. The villain is a proprietor of shares, and a long lunged orator in the meetings. I hear he has prophesied our incapacity, — 'a foregone conclu-

tioned in this letter,) who had taken upon themselves the management of Drury Lane Theatre; and it had been his wish, on the first construction of the Committee, that I should be one of his colleagues. To some mistake in the mode of conveying this proposal to me, he alludes in the preceding sentence.

sion,' whereof I hope to give him signal proofs before we are done.

"Will you give us an opera? No, I'll be sworn; but I wish you would.

"To go on with the poetical world, Walter Scott has gone back to Scotland. Murray, the bookseller, has been cruelly cudgelled of misbegotten knaves, 'in Kendal green,' at Newington Butts, in his way home from a purlieu dinner, — and robbed — would you believe it? — of three or four bonds of forty pound a piece, and a seal-ring of his grandfather's, worth a million! This is his version, — but others opine that D'Israeli, with whom he dined, knocked him down with his last publication, 'The Quarrels of Authors,' in a dispute about copyright. Be that as it may, the newspapers have teemed with his 'injuria formæ,' and he has been embrocated, and invisible to all but the apothecary ever since.

"Lady B. is better than three months advanced in her progress towards maternity, and, we hope, likely to go well through with it. We have been very little out this season, as I wish to keep her quiet in her present situation. Her father and mother have changed their names to Noel, in compliance with Lord Wentworth's will, and in complaisance to the property bequeathed by him.

"I hear that you have been gloriously received by the Irish, — and so you ought. But don't let them kill you with claret and kindness at the national dinner in your honour, which, I hear and hope, is in contemplation. If you will tell me the day, I'll get

drunk myself on this side of the water, and waft you an applauding hiccup over the Channel.

" Of politics, we have nothing but the yell for war; and C * * h is preparing his head for the pike, on which we shall see it carried before he has done. The loan has made every body sulky. I hear often from Paris, but in direct contradiction to the home statements of our hirelings. Of domestic doings, there has been nothing since Lady D * *. Not a divorce stirring,—but a good many in embryo, in the shape of marriages.

" I enclose you an epistle received this morning from I know not whom; but I think it will amuse you. The writer must be a rare fellow. *

" P. S. A gentleman named D'Alton (not your

The following is the enclosure here referred to: —

" Darlington, June 3. 1815.

" My Lord,

" I have lately purchased a set of your works, and am quite vexed that you have not cancelled the Ode to Buonaparte. It certainly was prematurely written, without thought or reflection. Providence has now brought him to reign over millions again, while the same Providence keeps as it were in a garrison another potentate, who, in the language of Mr. Burke, 'he hurled from his throne.' See if you cannot make amends for your folly, and consider that, in almost every respect, human nature is the same, in every clime and in every period, and don't act the part of a *foolish boy*. — Let not Englishmen talk of the stretch of tyrants, while the torrents of blood shed in the East Indies cry aloud to Heaven for retaliation. Learn, good sir, not to cast the first stone. I remain your Lordship's servant,

" J. R * *."

Dalton) has sent me a National Poem called 'Dermid.' The same cause which prevented my writing to you operated against my wish to write to him an epistle of thanks. If you see him, will you make all kinds of fine speeches for me, and tell him that I am the laziest and most ungrateful of mortals?

"A word more; — don't let Sir John Stevenson (as an evidence on trials for copy-right, &c.) talk about the price of your next poem, or they will come upon you for the *property tax* for it. I am serious, and have just heard a long story of the rascally tax-men making Scott pay for his. So, take care. Three hundred is a devil of a deduction out of three thousand."

LETTER 223. TO MR. MOORE.

"July 7. 1815.

"'Grata superveniet,' &c. &c. I had written to you again, but burnt the letter, because I began to think you seriously hurt at my indolence, and did not know how the buffoonery it contained might be taken. In the mean time, I have yours, and all is well.

"I had given over all hopes of yours. By-the-by, my 'grata superveniet' should be in the present tense; for I perceive it looks now as if it applied to this present scrawl reaching you, whereas it is to the receipt of thy Kilkenny epistle that I have tacked that venerable sentiment.

"Poor Whitbread died yesterday morning, — a sudden and severe loss. His health had been wavering, but so fatal an attack was not appre-

hended. He dropped down, and I believe never spoke afterwards. I perceive Perry attributes his death to Drury Lane,—a consolatory encouragement to the new Committee. I have no doubt that * *, who is of a plethoric habit, will be bled immediately; and as I have, since my marriage, lost much of my paleness, and—'horresco referens' (for I hate even *moderate* fat)—that happy slenderness, to which, when I first knew you, I had attained, I by no means sit easy under this dispensation of the Morning Chronicle. Every one must regret the loss of Whitbread; he was surely a great and very good man.

"Paris is taken for the second time. I presume it, for the future, will have an anniversary capture. In the late battles, like all the world, I have lost a connection,—poor Frederick Howard, the best of his race. I had little intercourse, of late years, with his family, but I never saw or heard but good of him. Hobhouse's brother is killed. In short, the havoc has not left a family out of its tender mercies.

"Every hope of a republic is over, and we must go on under the old system. But I am sick at heart of politics and slaughters; and the luck which Providence is pleased to lavish on Lord Castlereagh is only a proof of the little value the gods set upon prosperity, when they permit such * * * s as he and that drunken corporal, old Blucher, to bully their betters. From this, however, Wellington should be excepted. He *is* a man,—and the Scipio of our Hannibal. However, he may thank the Russian

frosts, which destroyed the *real élite* of the French army, for the successes of Waterloo.

"La! Moore—how you blasphemes about 'Parnassus' and 'Moses!' I am ashamed for you. Won't you do any thing for the drama? We beseech an Opera. Kinnaird's blunder was partly mine. I wanted you of all things in the Committee, and so did he. But we are now glad you were wiser; for it is, I doubt, a bitter business.

When shall we see you in England? Sir Ralph Noel (*late* Milbanke—he don't promise to be *late* Noel in a hurry), finding that one man can't inhabit two houses, has given his place in the north to me for a habitation; and there Lady B. threatens to be brought to bed in November. Sir R. and my Lady Mother are to quarter at Kirby—Lord Wentworth's that was. Perhaps you and Mrs. Moore will pay us a visit at Seaham in the course of the autumn. If so, you and I (*without* our *wives*) will take a *lark* to Edinburgh and embrace Jeffrey. It is not much above one hundred miles from us. But all this, and other high matters, we will discuss at meeting, which I hope will be on your return. We don't leave town till August.

"Ever," &c.

LETTER 224. TO MR. SOTHEBY.

"Sept. 15. 1815. Piccadilly Terrace.

"Dear Sir,

"'Ivan' is accepted, and will be put in progress on Kean's arrival.

"The theatrical gentlemen have a confident hope

of its success. I know not that any alterations for the stage will be necessary; if any, they will be trifling, and you shall be duly apprised. I would suggest that you should not attend any except the latter rehearsals — the managers have requested me to state this to you. You can see them, viz. Dibdin and Rae, whenever you please, and I will do any thing you wish to be done on your suggestion, in the mean time.

"Mrs. Mardyn is not yet out, and nothing can be determined till she has made her appearance — I mean as to her capacity for the part you mention, which I take it for granted is not in Ivan — as I think Ivan may be performed very well without her. But of that hereafter. Ever yours, very truly,

"BYRON.

"P. S. You will be glad to hear that the season has begun uncommonly well — great and constant houses — the performers in much harmony with the Committee and one another, and as much good-humour as can be preserved in such complicated and extensive interests as the Drury Lane proprietary."

TO MR. SOTHEBY.

"September 25. 1815.

"Dear Sir,

"I think it would be advisable for you to see the acting managers when convenient, as there must be points on which you will want to confer; the objection I stated was merely on the part of the

performers, and is *general* and not *particular* to this instance. I thought it as well to mention it at once —and some of the rehearsals you will doubtless see, notwithstanding.

"Rae, I rather think, has his eye on Naritzin for himself. He is a more popular performer than Bartley, and certainly the cast will be stronger with him in it; besides, he is one of the managers, and will feel doubly interested if he can act in both capacities. Mrs. Bartley will be Petrowna;—as to the Empress, I know not what to say or think. The truth is, we are not amply furnished with tragic women; but make the best of those we have,—you can take your choice of them. We have all great hopes of the success—on which, setting aside other considerations, we are particularly anxious, as being the first tragedy to be brought out since the old Committee.

"By the way—I have a charge against you. As the great Mr. Dennis roared out on a similar occasion—'By G—d, *that* is *my* thunder!' so do I exclaim, '*This* is *my* lightning!' I allude to a speech of Ivan's, in the scene with Petrowna and the Empress, where the thought and almost expression are similar to Conrad's in the 3d Canto of 'The Corsair.' I, however, do not say this to accuse you, but to exempt myself from suspicion *, as there

* Notwithstanding this precaution of the poet, the coincidence in question was, but a few years after, triumphantly cited in support of the sweeping charge of plagiarism brought against him by some scribblers. The following are Mr. Sotheby's lines:—

is a priority of six months' publication, on my part, between the appearance of that composition and of your tragedies.

"George Lambe meant to have written to you. If you don't like to confer with the managers at present, I will attend to your wishes — so state them. Yours very truly, BYRON."

LETTER 225. TO MR. TAYLOR.

"13. Terrace, Piccadilly, September 25. 1815.

"Dear Sir,

"I am sorry you should feel uneasy at what has by no means troubled me.* If your editor, his correspondents, and readers, are amused, I have no objection to be the theme of all the ballads he can

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"And I have leapt
In transport from my flinty couch, to welcome
The thunder as it burst upon my roof,
And beckon'd to the lightning, as it flash'd
And sparkled on these fetters."

I have since been informed by Mr. Sotheby that, though not published, these lines had been written long before the appearance of Lord Byron's poem.

* Mr. Taylor having inserted in the Sun newspaper (of which he was then chief proprietor) a sonnet to Lord Byron, in return for a present which his Lordship had sent him of a handsomely bound copy of all his works, there appeared in the same journal, on the following day (from the pen of some person who had acquired a control over the paper), a parody upon this sonnet, containing some disrespectful allusion to Lady Byron; and it is to this circumstance, which Mr. Taylor had written to explain, that the above letter, so creditable to the feelings of the noble husband, refers.

find room for, — provided his lucubrations are confined to *me* only.

"It is a long time since things of this kind have ceased to 'fright me from my propriety;' nor do I know any similar attack which would induce me to turn again, — unless it involved those connected with me, whose qualities, I hope, are such as to exempt them in the eyes of those who bear no good-will to myself. In such a case, supposing it to occur — to *reverse* the saying of Dr. Johnson, — 'what the law could not do for me, I would do for myself,' be the consequences what they might.

"I return you, with many thanks, Colman and the letters. The poems, I hope, you intended me to keep; — at least, I shall do so, till I hear the contrary. Very truly yours."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Sept. 25. 1815.

"Will you publish the Drury Lane 'Magpie?' or, what is more, will you give fifty, or even forty, pounds for the copyright of the said? I have undertaken to ask you this question on behalf of the translator, and wish you would. We can't get so much for him by ten pounds from any body else, and I, knowing your magnificence, would be glad of an answer. Ever," &c.

LETTER 226. TO MR. MURRAY.

"September 27. 1815.

"That's right and splendid, and becoming a publisher of high degree. Mr. Concanen (the translator)

will be delighted, and pay his washerwoman; and, in reward for your bountiful behaviour in this instance, I won't ask you to publish any more for Drury Lane, or any lane whatever, again. You will have no tragedy or any thing else from me, I assure you, and may think yourself lucky in having got rid of me, for good and all, without more damage. But I'll tell you what we will do for you,—act Sotheby's Ivan, which will succeed; and then your present and next impression of the dramas of that dramatic gentleman will be expedited to your heart's content; and if there is any thing very good, you shall have the refusal; but you sha'n't have any more requests.

"Sotheby has got a thought, and almost the words, from the third Canto of The Corsair, which, you know, was published six months before his tragedy. It is from the storm in Conrad's cell. I have written to Mr. Sotheby to claim it; and, as Dennis roared out of the pit, 'By G—d, *that's my* thunder!' so do I, and will I, exclaim, 'By G—d that's *my lightning!*' that electrical fluid being, in fact, the subject of the said passage.

"You will have a print of Fanny Kelly, in the Maid, to prefix, which is honestly worth twice the money you have given for the MS. Pray what did you do with the note I gave you about Mungo Park?

"Ever," &c.

LETTER 227. TO MR. MOORE.

"13. Terrace, Piccadilly, October 28. 1815.

"You are, it seems, in England again, as I am to hear from every body but yourself; and I suppose

you punctilious, because I did not answer your last Irish letter. When did you leave the 'swate country?' Never mind, I forgive you;—a strong proof of—I know not what—to give the lie to—

'He never pardons who hath done the wrong.'

"You have written to * *. You have also written to Perry, who intimates hope of an Opera from you. Coleridge has promised a Tragedy. Now, if you keep Perry's word, and Coleridge keeps his own, Drury Lane will be set up; and, sooth to say, it is in grievous want of such a lift. We began at speed, and are blown already. When I say 'we,' I mean Kinnaird, who is the 'all in all sufficient,' and can count, which none of the rest of the Committee can.

"It is really very good fun, as far as the daily and nightly stir of these strutters and fretters go; and, if the concern could be brought to pay a shilling in the pound, would do much credit to the management. Mr.——has an accepted tragedy * * * * *, whose first scene is in his sleep (I don't mean the author's). It was forwarded to us as a prodigious favourite of Kean's; but the said Kean, upon interrogation, denies his eulogy, and protests against his part. How it will end, I know not.

"I say so much about the theatre, because there is nothing else alive in London at this season. All the world are out of it, except us, who remain to lie in,—in December, or perhaps earlier. Lady B. is very ponderous and prosperous, apparently, and I wish it well over.

"There is a play before me from a personage who

signs himself 'Hibernicus.' The hero is Malachi, the Irishman and king; and the villain and usurper, Turgesius, the Dane. The conclusion is fine. Turgesius is chained by the leg (*vide* stage direction) to a pillar on the stage; and King Malachi makes him a speech, not unlike Lord Castlereagh's about the balance of power and the lawfulness of legitimacy, which puts Turgesius into a frenzy—as Castlereagh's would, if his audience was chained by the leg. He draws a dagger and rushes at the orator; but, finding himself at the end of his tether, he sticks it into his own carcass, and dies, saying, he has fulfilled a prophecy.

"Now, this is *serious downright matter of fact*, and the gravest part of a tragedy which is not intended for burlesque. I tell it you for the honour of Ireland. The writer hopes it will be represented:—but what is Hope? nothing but the paint on the face of Existence; the least touch of Truth rubs it off, and then we see what a hollow-cheeked harlot we have got hold of. I am not sure that I have not said this last superfine reflection before. But never mind;—it will do for the tragedy of Turgesius, to which I can append it.

"Well, but how dost thou do? thou bard not of a thousand but three thousand! I wish your friend, Sir John Piano-forte, had kept that to himself, and not made it public at the trial of the song-seller in Dublin. I tell you why: it is a liberal thing for Longman to do, and honourable for you to obtain; but it will set all the 'hungry and dinnerless, lank-jawed judges' upon the fortunate author. But they

be d—d! —the 'Jeffrey and the Moore together are confident against the world in ink!' By the way, if poor C * * e — who is a man of wonderful talent, and in distress*, and about to publish two vols. of Poesy and Biography, and who has been worse used by the critics than ever we were — will you, if he comes out, promise me to review him favourably in the E. R.? Praise him I think you must, but you will also praise him *well*, — of all things the most difficult. It will be the making of him.

"This must be a secret between you and me, as Jeffrey might not like such a project;—nor, indeed, might C. himself like it. But I do think he only wants a pioneer and a sparkle or two to explode most gloriously. Ever yours most affectionately, B.

"P. S. This is a sad scribbler's letter; but the next shall be 'more of this world.'"

As, after this letter, there occur but few allusions to his connection with the Drury Lane Management, I shall here avail myself of the opportunity to give some extracts from his "Detached Thoughts," containing recollections of his short acquaintance with the interior of the theatre.

"When I belonged to the Drury Lane Committee, and was one of the Sub-Committee of Management,

* It is but justice both to "him that gave and him that took" to mention that the noble poet, at this time, with a delicacy which enhanced the kindness, advanced to the eminent person here spoken of, on the credit of some work he was about to produce, one hundred pounds.

the number of *plays* upon the shelves were about *five* hundred. Conceiving that amongst these there must be *some* of merit, in person and by proxy I caused an investigation. I do not think that of those which I saw there was one which could be conscientiously tolerated. There never were such things as most of them! Mathurin was very kindly recommended to me by Walter Scott, to whom I had recourse, firstly, in the hope that he would do something for us himself; and, secondly, in my despair, that he would point out to us any young (or old) writer of promise. Mathurin sent his Bertram and a letter *without* his address, so that at first I could give him no answer. When I at last hit upon his residence, I sent him a favourable answer and something more substantial. His play succeeded; but I was at that time absent from England.

"I tried Coleridge too; but he had nothing feasible in hand at the time. Mr. Sotheby obligingly offered *all* his tragedies, and I pledged myself, and notwithstanding many squabbles with my Committed Brethren, did get 'Ivan' accepted, read, and the parts distributed. But, lo! in the very heart of the matter, upon some *tepid*ness on the part of Kean, or warmth on that of the author, Sotheby withdrew his play. Sir J. B. Burgess did also present four tragedies and a farce, and I moved green-room and Sub-Committee, but they would not.

"Then the scenes I had to go through!—the authors, and the authoresses, and the milliners, and the wild Irishmen,—the people from Brighton, from Blackwall, from Chatham, from Cheltenham, from

Dublin, from Dundee, — who came in upon me! to all of whom it was proper to give a civil answer, and a hearing, and a reading. Mrs. * * * *'s father, an Irish dancing-master of sixty years, calling upon me to request to play Archer, dressed in silk stockings on a frosty morning to show his legs (which were certainly good and Irish for his age, and had been still better,) — Miss Emma Somebody, with a play entitled 'The Bandit of Bohemia,' or some such title or production, — Mr. O'Higgins, then resident at Richmond, with an Irish tragedy, in which the unities could not fail to be observed, for the protagonist was chained by the leg to a pillar during the chief part of the performance. He was a wild man, of a salvage appearance, and the difficulty of *not* laughing at him was only to be got over by reflecting upon the probable consequences of such cachinnation.

"As I am really a civil and polite person, and *do* hate giving pain when it can be avoided, I sent them up to Douglas Kinnaird, — who is a man of business, and sufficiently ready with a negative, — and left them to settle with him; and as the beginning of next year I went abroad, I have since been little aware of the progress of the theatres.

"Players are said to be an impracticable people. They are so; but I managed to steer clear of any disputes with them, and excepting one debate * with

* A correspondent of one of the monthly Miscellanies gives the following account of this incident: —

"During Lord Byron's administration, a ballet was invented by the elder Byrne, in which Miss Smith (since Mrs. Oscar

the elder Byrne about Miss Smith's *pas de* — (something — I forget the technicals,) — I do not remember any litigation of my own. I used to protect Miss Smith, because she was like Lady Jane Harley in the face, and likenesses go a great way with me. Indeed, in general, I left such things to my more bustling colleagues, who used to reprove me seriously for not being able to take such things in hand without buffooning with the histrions, or throwing things into confusion by treating light matters with levity.

" Then the Committee ! — then the Sub-Committee ! — we were but few, but never agreed. There was Peter Moore who contradicted Kinnaird, and Kinnaird who contradicted every body: then our two managers, Rae and Dibdin ; and our secretary, Ward ! and yet we were all very zealous and in

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Byrne) had a *pas seul*. This the lady wished to remove to a later period in the ballet. The ballet-master refused, and the lady swore she would not dance it at all. The music incidental to the dance began to play, and the lady walked off the stage. Both parties flounced into the green-room to lay the case before Lord Byron, who happened to be the only person in that apartment. The noble committee-man made an award in favour of Miss Smith, and both complainants rushed angrily out of the room at the instant of my entering it. ' If you had come a minute sooner,' said Lord Byron, ' you would have heard a curious matter decided on by me: a question of dancing! — by me,' added he, looking down at the lame limb, ' whom Nature from my birth has prohibited from taking a single step.' His countenance fell after he had uttered this, as if he had said too much ; and for a moment there was an embarrassing silence on both sides."

earnest to do good and so forth. * * * * furnished us with prologues to our revived old English plays; but was not pleased with me for complimenting him as 'the Upton' of our theatre (Mr. Upton is or was the poet who writes the songs for Astley's), and almost gave up prologuing in consequence.

"In the pantomime of 1815–16 there was a representation of the masquerade of 1814 given by 'us youth' of Watier's Club to Wellington and Co. Douglas Kinnaird and one or two others, with myself, put on masks, and went on the stage with the οἱ πολλοι, to see the effect of a theatre from the stage: — it is very grand. Douglas danced among the figuranti too, and they were puzzled to find out who we were, as being more than their number. It was odd enough that Douglas Kinnaird and I should have been both at the *real* masquerade, and afterwards in the mimic one of the same, on the stage of Drury Lane theatre."

LETTER 228. TO MR. MOORE.

"Terrace, Piccadilly, October 31. 1815.

"I have not been able to ascertain precisely the time of duration of the stock market; but I believe it is a good time for selling out, and I hope so. First, because I shall see you; and, next, because I shall receive certain monies on behalf of Lady B., the which will materially conduce to my comfort, — I wanting (as the duns say) 'to make up a sum.'

"Yesterday, I dined out with a large-ish party, where were Sheridan and Colman, Harry Harris of C. G, and his brother, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Ds.

Kinnaird, and others, of note and notoriety. Like other parties of the kind, it was first silent, then talky, then argumentative, then disputatious, then unintelligible, then altogethery, then inarticulate, and then drunk. When we had reached the last step of this glorious ladder, it was difficult to get down again without stumbling; and to crown all, Kinnaird and I had to conduct Sheridan down a d—d corkscrew staircase, which had certainly been constructed before the discovery of fermented liquors, and to which no legs, however crooked, could possibly accommodate themselves. We deposited him safe at home, where his man, evidently used to the business, waited to receive him in the hall.

" Both he and Colman were, as usual, very good; but I carried away much wine, and the wine had previously carried away my memory; so that all was hiccup and happiness for the last hour or so, and I am not impregnated with any of the conversation. Perhaps you heard of a late answer of Sheridan to the watchman who found him bereft of that 'divine particle of air,' called reason, * * *. He, the watchman, who found Sherry in the street, fuddled and bewildered, and almost insensible. 'Who are *you*, sir?'—no answer. 'What's your name?'—a hiccup. 'What's your name?'—Answer, in a slow, deliberate and impassive tone—'Wilberforce!!!' Is not that Sherry all over?—and, to my mind, excellent. Poor fellow, *his* very dregs are better than the 'first sprightly runnings' of others.

"My paper is full, and I have a grievous headach.

"P. S. Lady B. is in full progress. Next month will bring to light (with the aid of 'Juno Lucina, *fer opem*,' or rather *opes*, for the last are most wanted,) the tenth wonder of the world — Gil Blas being the eighth, and he (my son's father) the ninth."

LETTER 229. TO MR. MOORE.

"November 4. 1815.

"Had you not bewildered my head with the 'stocks,' your letter would have been answered directly. Hadn't I to go to the city? and hadn't I to remember what to ask when I got there? and hadn't I forgotten it?

"I should be undoubtedly delighted to see you; but I don't like to urge against your reasons my own inclinations. Come you must soon, for stay you *won't*. I know you of old; — you have been too much leavened with London to keep long out of it.

"Lewis is going to Jamaica to suck his sugar canes. He sails in two days; I enclose you his farewell note. I saw him last night at D. L. T. for the last time previous to his voyage. Poor fellow! he is really a good man—an excellent man—he left me his walking-stick and a pot of preserved ginger. I shall never eat the last without tears in my eyes, it is so *hot*. We have had a devil of a row among our ballerinas. Miss Smith has been wronged about a hornpipe. The Committee have interfered; but Byrne, the d—d ballet master, won't budge a step. *I* am furious, so

is George Lamb. Kinnaird is very glad, because — he don't know why; and I am very sorry, for the same reason. To-day I dine with Kd. — we are to have Sheridan and Colman again; and to-morrow, once more, at Sir Gilbert Heathcote's.

"Leigh Hunt has written a *real good* and *very original Poem*, which I think will be a great hit. You can have no notion how very well it is written, nor should I, had I not redde it. As to us, Tom — eh, when art thou out? If you think the verses worth it, I would rather they were embalmed in the Irish Melodies, than scattered abroad in a separate song — much rather. But when are thy great things out? I mean the Po of Pos — thy Shah Nameh. It is very kind in Jeffrey to like the Hebrew Melodies. Some of the fellows here preferred Sternhold and Hopkins, and said so; — 'the fiend receive their souls therefor!'

"I must go and dress for dinner. Poor, dear Murat, what an end! You know, I suppose, that his white plume used to be a rallying point in battle, like Henry IV.'s. He refused a confessor and a bandage; so would neither suffer his soul or body to be bandaged. You shall have more to-morrow or next day.

"Ever," &c.

LETTER 230. TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 4. 1815.

"When you have been enabled to form an opinion on Mr. Coleridge's MS. * you will oblige me by

* A tragedy entitled, I think, Zopolia.

returning it, as, in fact, I have no authority to let it out of my hands. I think most highly of it, and feel anxious that you should be the publisher; but if you are not, I do not despair of finding those who will.

"I have written to Mr. Leigh Hunt, stating your willingness to treat with him, which, when I saw you, I understood you to be. Terms and time, I leave to his pleasure and your discernment; but this I will say, that I think it the *safest* thing you ever engaged in. I speak to you as a man of business; were I to talk to you as a reader or a critic, I should say it was a very wonderful and beautiful performance, with just enough of fault to make its beauties more remarked and remarkable.

"And now to the last — my own, which I feel ashamed of after the others: — publish or not as you like, I don't care *one damn*. If *you* don't, no one else shall, and I never thought or dreamed of it, except as one in the collection. If it is worth being in the fourth volume, put it there and nowhere else; and if not, put it in the fire. Yours, N."

Those embarrassments which, from a review of his affairs previous to the marriage, he had clearly foreseen would, before long, overtake him, were not slow in realising his worst omens. The increased expenses induced by his new mode of life, with but very little increase of means to meet them, — the long arrears of early pecuniary obligations, as well as the claims which had been, gradually, since then, accumulating, all pressed upon him now with collected force, and

reduced him to some of the worst humiliations of poverty. He had been even driven, by the necessity of encountering such demands, to the trying expedient of parting with his books, — which circumstance coming to Mr. Murray's ears, that gentleman instantly forwarded to him 1500*l.*, with an assurance that another sum of the same amount should be at his service in a few weeks, and that if such assistance should not be sufficient, Mr. Murray was most ready to dispose of the copyrights of all his past works for his use.

This very liberal offer Lord Byron acknowledged in the following letter: —

LETTER 231. TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 14. 1815.

"I return you your bills not accepted, but certainly not *unhonoured*. Your present offer is a favour which I would accept from you, if I accepted such from any man. Had such been my intention, I can assure you I would have asked you fairly, and as freely as you would give; and I cannot say more of my confidence or your conduct.

"The circumstances which induce me to part with my books, though sufficiently, are not *immediately*, pressing. I have made up my mind to them, and there 's an end.

"Had I been disposed to trespass on your kindness in this way, it would have been before now; but I am not sorry to have an opportunity of declining it, as it sets my opinion of you, and indeed of human

nature, in a different light from that in which I have been accustomed to consider it.

"Believe me very truly," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"December 25. 1815.

"I send some lines, written some time ago, and intended as an opening to 'The Siege of Corinth.' I had forgotten them, and am not sure that they had not better be left out now:—on that, you and your Synod can determine. Yours," &c.

The following are the lines alluded to in this note. They are written in the loosest form of that rambling style of metre which his admiration of Mr. Coleridge's "Christabel" led him, at this time, to adopt; and he judged rightly, perhaps, in omitting them as the opening of his poem. They are, however, too full of spirit and character to be lost. Though breathing the thick atmosphere of Piccadilly when he wrote them, it is plain that his fancy was far away, among the sunny hills and vales of Greece; and their contrast with the tame life he was leading at the moment, but gave to his recollections a fresher spring and force.

"In the year since Jesus died for men,
Eighteen hundred years and ten,
We were a gallant company,
Riding o'er land, and sailing o'er sea.
Oh! but we went merrily!
We forded the river, and clomb the high hill,
Never our steeds for a day stood still;

Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,
Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed;
Whether we couch'd in our rough capote,
On the rougher plank of our gliding boat,
Or stretch'd on the beach, or our saddles spread
As a pillow beneath the resting head,
Fresh we woke upon the morrow:
All our thoughts and words had scope,
We had health, and we had hope,
Toil and travel, but no sorrow.
We were of all tongues and creeds; —
Some were those who counted beads,
Some of mosque, and some of church,
And some, or I mis-say, of neither;
Yet through the wide world might ye search
Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.

" But some are dead, and some are gone,
And some are scatter'd and alone,
And some are rebels on the hills *
That look along Epirus' valleys
Where Freedom still at moments rallies,
And pays in blood Oppression's ills:
And some are in a far countree,
And some all restlessly at home;
But never more, oh! never, we
Shall meet to revel and to roam.
But those hardy days flew cheerily;
And when they now fall drearily,
My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main
And bear my spirit back again
Over the earth, and through the air,
A wild bird, and a wanderer.

* " The last tidings recently heard of Dervish (one of the Arnaouts who followed me) state him to be in revolt upon the mountains, at the head of some of the bands common in that country in times of trouble."

'Tis this that ever wakes my strain,
And oft, too oft, implores again
The few who may endure my lay,
To follow me so far away.

" Stranger — wilt thou follow now,
And sit with me on Acro-Corinth's brow ? "

LETTER 232. TO MR. MOORE.

" January 5. 1816.

" I hope Mrs. M. is quite re-established. The little girl was born on the 10th of December last; her name is Augusta *Ada* (the second a very antique family name,—I believe not used since the reign of King John). She was, and is, very flourishing and fat, and reckoned very large for her days — squalls and sucks incessantly. Are you answered? Her mother is doing very well, and up again.

" I have now been married a year on the second of this month — heigh-ho! I have seen nobody lately much worth noting, except S * * and another general of the Gauls, once or twice at dinners out of doors. S * * is a fine, foreign, villanous-looking, intelligent, and very agreeable man; his compatriot is more of the *petit-maître*, and younger, but I should think not at all of the same intellectual calibre with the Corsican — which S * *, you know, is, and a cousin of Napoleon's.

" Are you never to be expected in town again? To be sure, there is no one here of the 1500 fillers of hot-rooms, called the fashionable world. My approaching papa-ship detained us for advice, &c. &c.

though I would as soon be here as any where else on this side of the Straits of Gibraltar.

" I would gladly — or, rather, sorrowfully — comply with your request of a dirge for the poor girl you mention.* But how can I write on one I have never seen or known? Besides, you will do it much better yourself. I could not write upon any thing, without some personal experience and foundation; far less on a theme so peculiar. Now, you have both in this case; and, if you had neither, you have more imagination, and would never fail.

" This is but a dull scrawl, and I am but a dull fellow. Just at present, I am absorbed in 500 contradictory contemplations, though with but one object in view — which will probably end in nothing, as most things we wish do. But never mind, — as somebody says, ' for the blue sky bends over all.' I only could be glad, if it bent over me where it is a little bluer; like the ' skyish top of blue Olympus,' which, by the way, looked very white when I last saw it.

" Ever," &c.

On reading over the foregoing letter, I was much struck by the tone of melancholy that pervaded it; and well knowing it to be the habit of the writer's mind to seek relief, when under the pressure of any

* I had mentioned to him, as a subject worthy of his best powers of pathos, a melancholy event which had just occurred in my neighbourhood, and to which I have myself made allusion in one of the Sacred Melodies — " Weep not for her."

disquiet or disgust, in that sense of freedom which told him that there were homes for him elsewhere, I could perceive, I thought, in his recollections of the "blue Olympus," some return of the restless and roving spirit, which unhappiness or impatience always called up in his mind. I had, indeed, at the time when he sent me those melancholy verses, "There's not a joy this world can give," &c. felt some vague apprehensions as to the mood into which his spirits then seemed to be sinking, and, in acknowledging the receipt of the verses, thus tried to banter him out of it: — "But why thus on your stool of melancholy again, Master Stephen? — This will never do — it plays the deuce with all the matter-of-fact duties of life, and you must bid adieu to it. Youth is the only time when one can be melancholy with impunity. As life itself grows sad and serious we have nothing for it but — to be as much as possible the contrary."

My absence from London during the whole of this year had deprived me of all opportunities of judging for myself how far the appearances of his domestic state gave promise of happiness; nor had any rumours reached me which at all inclined me to suspect that the course of his married life hitherto exhibited less smoothness than such unions, — on the surface, at least, — generally wear. The strong and affectionate terms in which, soon after the marriage, he had, in some of the letters I have given, declared his own happiness — a declaration which his known frankness left me no room to question — had, in no small degree, tended to still those appre-

hensions which my first view of the lot he had chosen for himself awakened. I could not, however, but observe that these indications of a contented heart soon ceased. His mention of the partner of his home became more rare and formal, and there was observable, I thought, through some of his letters a feeling of unquiet and weariness that brought back all those gloomy anticipations with which I had, from the first, regarded his fate. This last letter of his, in particular, struck me as full of sad omen, and, in the course of my answer, I thus noticed to him the impression it had made on me: — "And so you are a whole year married! —

> 'It was last year I vow'd to thee
> That fond impossibility.'

Do you know, my dear B., there was a something in your last letter — a sort of unquiet mystery, as well as a want of your usual elasticity of spirits — which has hung upon my mind unpleasantly ever since. I long to be near you, that I might know how you really look and feel; for these letters tell nothing, and one word, *a quattr'occhi*, is worth whole reams of correspondence. But only *do* tell me you are happier than that letter has led me to fear, and I shall be satisfied."

It was in a few weeks after this latter communication between us that Lady Byron adopted the resolution of parting from him. She had left London about the middle of January, on a visit to her father's house, in Leicestershire, and Lord Byron was, in a short time after, to follow her. They had parted

in the utmost kindness, — she wrote him a letter, full of playfulness and affection, on the road, and, immediately on her arrival at Kirkby Mallory, her father wrote to acquaint Lord Byron that she would return to him no more. At the time when he had to stand this unexpected shock, his pecuniary embarrassments, which had been fast gathering around him during the whole of the last year (there having been no less than eight or nine executions in his house within that period), had arrived at their utmost; and at a moment when, to use his own strong expressions, he was "standing alone on his hearth, with his household gods shivered around him," he was also doomed to receive the startling intelligence that the wife who had just parted with him in kindness, had parted with him — for ever.

About this time the following note was written: —

TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 8. 1816.

"Do not mistake me — I really returned your book for the reason assigned, and no other. It is too good for so careless a fellow. I have parted with all my own books, and positively won't deprive you of so valuable 'a drop of that immortal man.'

"I shall be very glad to see you, if you like to call, though I am at present contending with 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,' some of which have struck at me from a quarter whence I did not indeed expect them. — But, no matter, 'there is a world elsewhere,' and I will cut my way through this as I can.

"If you write to Moore, will you tell him that I shall answer his letter the moment I can muster time and spirits? Ever yours,

"Bn."

The rumours of the separation did not reach me till more than a week afterwards, when I immediately wrote to him thus: — "I am most anxious to hear from you, though I doubt whether I ought to mention the subject on which I am so anxious. If, however, what I heard last night, in a letter from town, be true, you will know immediately what I allude to, and just communicate as much or as little upon the subject as you think proper; — only *something* I should like to know, as soon as possible, from yourself, in order to set my mind at rest with respect to the truth or falsehood of the report." The following is his answer: —

Letter 233. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 29. 1816.

"I have not answered your letter for a time; and, at present, the reply to part of it might extend to such a length, that I shall delay it till it can be made in person, and then I will shorten it as much as I can.

"In the mean time, I am at war 'with all the world and his wife;' or rather, 'all the world and *my* wife' are at war with me, and have not yet crushed me, — whatever they *may* do. I don't know that in the course of a hair-breadth existence I was ever, at home or abroad, in a situation so completely uprooting of present pleasure, or rational hope for the

future, as this same. I say this, because I think so, and feel it. But I shall not sink under it the more for that mode of considering the question — I have made up my mind.

"By the way, however, you must not believe all you hear on the subject; and don't attempt to defend me. If you succeeded in that, it would be a mortal, or an immortal, offence — who can bear refutation? I have but a very short answer for those whom it concerns; and all the activity of myself and some vigorous friends have not yet fixed on any tangible ground or personage, on which or with whom I can discuss matters, in a summary way, with a fair pretext; — though I nearly had *nailed one* yesterday, but he evaded by — what was judged by others — a satisfactory explanation. I speak of *circulators* — against whom I have no enmity, though I must act according to the common code of usage, when I hit upon those of the serious order.

"Now for other matters — poesy, for instance. Leigh Hunt's poem is a devilish good one — quaint, here and there, but with the substratum of originality, and with poetry about it, that will stand the test. I do not say this because he has inscribed it to me, which I am sorry for, as I should otherwise have begged you to review it in the Edinburgh.* It is

* My reply to this part of his letter was, I find, as follows: — "With respect to Hunt's poem, though it is, I own, full of beauties, and though I like himself sincerely, I really could not undertake to praise it *seriously*. There is so much of the *quizzible* in all he writes, that I never can put on the proper pathetic face in reading him."

really deserving of much praise, and a favourable critique in the E. R. would but do it justice, and set it up before the public eye where it ought to be.

"How are you? and where? I have not the most distant idea what I am going to do myself, or with myself — or where — or what. I had, a few weeks ago, some things to say that would have made you laugh; but they tell me now that I must not laugh, and so I have been very serious — and am.

"I have not been very well — with a *liver* complaint — but am much better within the last fortnight, though still under Iatrical advice. I have latterly seen a little of * * * *

"I must go and dress to dine. My little girl is in the country, and, they tell me, is a very fine child, and now nearly three months old. Lady Noel (my mother-in-law, or, rather, *at* law) is at present overlooking it. Her daughter (Miss Milbanke that was) is, I believe, in London with her father. A Mrs. C. (now a kind of housekeeper and spy of Lady N.'s) who, in her better days, was a washerwoman, is supposed to be — by the learned — very much the occult cause of our late domestic discrepancies.

"In all this business, I am the sorriest for Sir Ralph. He and I are equally punished, though *magis pares quam similes* in our affliction. Yet it is hard for both to suffer for the fault of one, and so it is — I shall be separated from my wife; he will retain his.

"Ever," &c.

In my reply to this letter, written a few days after, there is a passage which (though containing an opinion it might have been more prudent, perhaps, to conceal,) I feel myself called upon to extract on account of the singularly generous avowal,—honourable alike to both the parties in this unhappy affair, — which it was the means of drawing from Lord Byron. The following are my words: — "I am much in the same state as yourself with respect to the subject of your letter, my mind being so full of things which I don't know how to write about, that *I* too must defer the greater part of them till we meet in May, when I shall put you fairly on your trial for all crimes and misdemeanors. In the mean time, you will not be at a loss for judges, nor executioners either, if they could have their will. The world, in their generous ardour to take what they call the weaker side, soon contrive to make it most formidably the strongest. Most sincerely do I grieve at what has happened. It has upset all my wishes and theories as to the influence of marriage on your life; for, instead of bringing you, as I expected, into something like a regular orbit, it has only cast you off again into infinite space, and left you, I fear, in a far worse state than it found you. As to defending you, the only person with whom I have yet attempted this task is myself; and, considering the little I know upon the subject, (or rather, perhaps, *owing* to this cause,) I have hitherto done it with very tolerable success. After all, your *choice* was the misfortune. I never liked,— but I'm here wandering into the *απορρητα*,

and so must change the subject for a far pleasanter one, your last new poems, which," &c. &c.

The return of post brought me the following answer, which, while it raises our admiration of the generous candour of the writer, but adds to the sadness and strangeness of the whole transaction.

LETTER 234. TO MR. MOORE.

" March 8. 1816.

" I rejoice in your promotion as Chairman and Charitable Steward, &c. &c. These be dignities which await only the virtuous. But then, recollect you are *six* and *thirty*, (I speak this enviously — not of your age, but the 'honour — love — obedience — troops of friends,' which accompany it,) and I have eight years good to run before I arrive at such hoary perfection; by which time, — if I *am* at all*, — it will probably be in a state of grace or progressing merits.

" I must set you right in one point, however. The fault was *not*— no, nor even the misfortune — in my 'choice' (unless in *choosing at all*) — for I do not believe — and I must say it, in the very dregs of all this bitter business — that there ever was a better, or even a brighter, a kinder, or a more amiable and agreeable being than Lady B. I never had, nor

* This sad doubt, — " if I *am* at all," — becomes no less singular than sad when we recollect that six and thirty was actually the age when he ceased to " be," and at a moment, too, when (as even the least friendly to him allow) he was in that state of " progressing merits" which he here jestingly anticipates.

can have, any reproach to make her, while with me. Where there is blame, it belongs to myself, and, if I cannot redeem, I must bear it.

"Her nearest relatives are a * * * * — my circumstances have been and are in a state of great confusion — my health has been a good deal disordered, and my mind ill at ease for a considerable period. Such are the causes (I do not name them as excuses) which have frequently driven me into excess, and disqualified my temper for comfort. Something also may be attributed to the strange and desultory habits which, becoming my own master at an early age, and scrambling about, over and through the world, may have induced. I still, however, think that, if I had had a fair chance, by being placed in even a tolerable situation, I might have gone on fairly. But that seems hopeless, — and there is nothing more to be said. At present — except my health, which is better (it is odd, but agitation or contest of any kind gives a rebound to my spirits and sets me up for the time) — I have to battle with all kinds of unpleasantnesses, including private and pecuniary difficulties, &c. &c.

"I believe I may have said this before to you, but I risk repeating it. It is nothing to bear the *privations* of adversity, or, more properly, ill fortune; but my pride recoils from its *indignities*. However, I have no quarrel with that same pride, which will, I think, buckler me through every thing. If my heart could have been broken, it would have been so years ago, and by events more afflicting than these.

" I agree with you (to turn from this topic to our shop) that I have written too much. The last things were, however, published very reluctantly by me, and for reasons I will explain when we meet. I know not why I have dwelt so much on the same scenes, except that I find them fading, or *confusing* (if such a word may be) in my memory, in the midst of present turbulence and pressure, and I felt anxious to stamp before the die was worn out. I now break it. With those countries, and events connected with them, all my really poetical feelings begin and end. Were I to try, I could make nothing of any other subject, and that I have apparently exhausted. ' Wo to him,' says Voltaire, ' who says all he could say on any subject.' There are some on which, perhaps, I could have said still more: but I leave them all, and too soon.

" Do you remember the lines I sent you early last year, which you still have? I don't wish (like Mr. Fitzgerald, in the Morning Post) to claim the character of ' Vates ' in all its translations, but were they not a little prophetic? I mean those beginning, ' There's not a joy the world can,' &c. &c., on which I rather pique myself as being the truest, though the most melancholy, I ever wrote.

" What a scrawl have I sent you! You say nothing of yourself, except that you are a Lancasterian churchwarden, and an encourager of mendicants. When are you out? and how is your family? My child is very well and flourishing, I hear; but I must see also. I feel no disposition to resign it to the contagion of its grandmother's society, though I

am unwilling to take it from the mother. It is weaned, however, and something about it must be decided. Ever," &c.

Having already gone so far in laying open to my readers some of the sentiments which I entertained, respecting Lord Byron's marriage, at a time when, little foreseeing that I should ever become his biographer, I was, of course, uninfluenced by the peculiar bias supposed to belong to that task, it may still further, perhaps, be permitted me to extract from my reply to the foregoing letter some sentences of explanation which its contents seemed to me to require.

" I had certainly no right to say any thing about the unluckiness of your choice, though I rejoice now that I did, as it has drawn from you a tribute which, however unaccountable and mysterious it renders the whole affair, is highly honourable to both parties. What I meant in hinting a doubt with respect to the object of your selection did not imply the least impeachment of that perfect amiableness which the world, I find, by common consent, allows to her. I only feared that she might have been too perfect — too *precisely* excellent — too matter-of-fact a paragon for you to coalesce with comfortably ; and that a person whose perfection hung in more easy folds about her, whose brightness was softened down by some of ' those fair defects which best conciliate love,' would, by appealing more dependently to your protection, have stood a much better chance with

your good nature. All these suppositions, however, I have been led into by my intense anxiety to acquit you of any thing like a capricious abandonment of such a woman * ; and, totally in the dark as I am with respect to all but the fact of your separation, you cannot conceive the solicitude, the fearful solicitude, with which I look forward to a history of the transaction from your own lips when we meet, — a history in which I am sure of, at least, *one* virtue — manly candour."

With respect to the causes that may be supposed to have led to this separation, it seems needless, with the characters of both parties before our eyes, to go in quest of any very remote or mysterious reasons to account for it. I have already, in some observations on the general character of men of genius, endeavoured to point out those peculiarities, both in disposition and habitudes, by which, in the far greater number of instances, they have been found unfitted for domestic happiness. Of these defects, (which are, as it were, the shadow that genius casts, and too generally, it is to be feared, in proportion to its stature,) Lord Byron could not, of course, fail to have inherited his share, in common with all the painfully-gifted class to which he belonged. How thoroughly, with respect to one attribute of this temperament which he possessed, — one, that "sicklies o'er" the face of happiness itself, — he was un-

* It will be perceived from this that I was as yet unacquainted with the true circumstances of the transaction.

derstood by the person most interested in observing him, will appear from the following anecdote, as related by himself. *

" People have wondered at the melancholy which runs through my writings. Others have wondered at my personal gaiety. But I recollect once, after an hour in which I had been sincerely and particularly gay and rather brilliant, in company, my wife replying to me when I said (upon her remarking my high spirits), ' And yet, Bell, I have been called and miscalled melancholy — you must have seen how falsely, frequently ? ' — ' No, Byron,' she answered, ' it is not so: at heart you are the most melancholy of mankind; and often when apparently gayest.' "

To these faults and sources of faults inherent, in his own sensitive nature, he added also many of those which a long indulgence of self-will generates, — the least compatible, of all others, (if not softened down, as they were in him, by good nature,) with that system of mutual concession and sacrifice by which the balance of domestic peace is maintained. When we look back, indeed, to the unbridled career, of which this marriage was meant to be the goal, — to the rapid and restless course in which his life had run along, like a burning train, through a series of wanderings, adventures, successes, and passions, the fever of all which was still upon him, when, with the same headlong recklessness, he rushed into this marriage, — it can but little surprise us that, in the space of one short year, he should not have been able to re-

* MS. — " Detached Thoughts."

cover all at once from his bewilderment, or to settle down into that tame level of conduct which the close observers of his every action required. As well might it be expected that a steed like his own Mazeppa's,

> " Wild as the wild deer and untaught,
> With spur and bridle undefiled —
> 'Twas but a day he had been caught,"

should stand still, when reined, without chafing or champing the bit.

Even had the new condition of life into which he passed been one of prosperity and smoothness, some time, as well as tolerance, must still have been allowed for the subsiding of so excited a spirit into rest. But, on the contrary, his marriage (from the reputation, no doubt, of the lady, as an heiress,) was, at once, a signal for all the arrears and claims of a long-accumulating state of embarrassment to explode upon him; — his door was almost daily beset by duns, and his house nine times during that year in possession of bailiffs *; while, in addition to these

* An anecdote connected with one of these occasions is thus related in the Journal just referred to: —

" When the bailiff (for I have seen most kinds of life) came upon me in 1815 to seize my chattels, (being a peer of parliament, my person was beyond him,) being curious (as is my habit), I first asked him " what extents elsewhere he had for government?" upon which he showed me one upon *one house only* for *seventy thousand pounds!* Next I asked him if he had nothing for Sheridan? " Oh — Sheridan!" said he; " ay, I have this" (pulling out a pocket-book, &c.); " but, my Lord, I have been in Sheridan's house a twelvemonth at a

anxieties and — what he felt still more — indignities of poverty, he had also the pain of fancying, whether rightly or wrongly, that the eyes of enemies and spies were upon him, even under his own roof, and that his every hasty word and look were interpreted in the most perverting light.

As, from the state of their means, his lady and he saw but little society, his only relief from the thoughts which a life of such embarrassment brought with it was in those avocations which his duty, as a member of the Drury Lane Committee, imposed upon him. And here, — in this most unlucky connection with the theatre, — one of the fatalities of his short year of trial, as husband, lay. From the reputation which he had previously acquired for gallantries, and the sort of reckless and boyish levity to which — often in very "bitterness of soul" — he gave way, it was not difficult to bring suspicion upon some of those acquaintances which his frequent intercourse with the green-room induced him to form, or even (as, in one instance, was the case,) to connect with his name injuriously that of a person to whom he had scarcely ever addressed a single word.

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time — a civil gentleman — knows how to deal with *us*," &c. &c. &c. Our own business was then discussed, which was none of the easiest for me at that time. But the man was civil, and (what I valued more) communicative. I had met many of his brethren, years before, in affairs of my friends, (commoners, that is,) but this was the first (or second) on my own account. — A civil man; fee'd accordingly; probably he anticipated as much."

Notwithstanding, however, this ill-starred concurrence of circumstances, which might have palliated any excesses either of temper or conduct into which they drove him, it was, after all, I am persuaded, to no such serious causes that the unfortunate alienation, which so soon ended in disunion, is to be traced. "In all the marriages I have ever seen," says Steele, "most of which have been unhappy ones, the great cause of evil has proceeded from slight occasions;" and to this remark, I think, the marriage under our consideration would not be found, upon enquiry, to be an exception. Lord Byron himself, indeed, when at Cephalonia, a short time before his death, seems to have expressed, in a few words, the whole pith of the mystery. An English gentleman with whom he was conversing on the subject of Lady Byron, having ventured to enumerate to him the various causes he had heard alleged for the separation, the noble poet, who had seemed much amused with their absurdity and falsehood, said, after listening to them all, — "The causes, my dear sir, were too simple to be easily found out."

In truth, the circumstances, so unexampled, that attended their separation, — the last words of the parting wife to the husband being those of the most playful affection, while the language of the deserted husband towards the wife was in a strain, as the world knows, of tenderest eulogy, — are in themselves a sufficient proof that, at the time of their parting, there could have been no very deep sense of injury on either side. It was not till afterwards that, in both bosoms, the repulsive force came into

operation,—when, to the party which had taken the first decisive step in the strife, it became naturally a point of pride to persevere in it with dignity, and this unbendingness provoked, as naturally, in the haughty spirit of the other, a strong feeling of resentment which overflowed, at last, in acrimony and scorn. If there be any truth, however, in the principle, that they "never pardon who have done the wrong," Lord Byron, who was, to the last, disposed to reconciliation, proved so far, at least, his conscience to have been unhaunted by any very disturbing consciousness of aggression.

But though it would have been difficult, perhaps, for the victims of this strife, themselves, to have pointed out any single, or definite, cause for their disunion,—beyond that general incompatibility which is the canker of all such marriages,—the public, which seldom allows itself to be at a fault on these occasions, was, as usual, ready with an ample supply of reasons for the breach,—all tending to blacken the already darkly painted character of the poet, and representing him, in short, as a finished monster of cruelty and depravity. The reputation of the object of his choice for every possible virtue, (a reputation which had been, I doubt not, one of his own chief incentives to the marriage, from the vanity, reprobate as he knew he was deemed, of being able to win such a paragon,) was now turned against him by his assailants, not only in the way of contrast with his own character, but as if the excellences of the wife were proof positive of every enormity they chose to charge upon the husband.

Meanwhile, the unmoved silence of the lady herself, (from motives, it is but fair to suppose, of generosity and delicacy,) under the repeated demands made for a specification of her charges against him, left to malice and imagination the fullest range for their combined industry. It was accordingly stated, and almost universally believed, that the noble lord's second proposal to Miss Milbanke had been but with a view to revenge himself for the slight inflicted by her refusal of the first, and that he himself had confessed so much to her on their way from church. At the time when, as the reader has seen from his own honey-moon letters, he was, with all the good will in the world, imagining himself into happiness, and even boasting, in the pride of his fancy, that if marriage were to be upon *lease*, he would gladly renew his own for a term of ninety-nine years, —at this very time, according to these veracious chroniclers, he was employed in darkly following up the aforesaid scheme of revenge, and tormenting his lady by all sorts of unmanly cruelties, — such as firing off pistols, to frighten her as she lay in bed *, and other such freaks.

* For this story, however, there was so far a foundation that the practice to which he had accustomed himself from boyhood, of having loaded pistols always near him at night, was considered so strange a propensity as to be included in that list of symptoms (sixteen, I believe, in number,) which were submitted to medical opinion, in proof of his insanity. Another symptom was the emotion, almost to hysterics, which he had exhibited on seeing Kean act Sir Giles Overreach. But the most plausible of all the grounds, as he himself used to allow,

To the falsehoods concerning his green-room intimacies, and particularly with respect to one beautiful actress, with whom, in reality, he had hardly ever exchanged a single word, I have already adverted; and the extreme confidence with which this tale was circulated and believed affords no unfair specimen of the sort of evidence with which the public, in all such fits of moral wrath, is satisfied. It is, at the same time, very far from my intention to allege that, in the course of the noble poet's intercourse with the theatre, he was not sometimes led into a line of acquaintance and converse, unbefitting, if not dangerous to, the steadiness of married life. But the imputations against him on this head were (as far as affected his conjugal character) not the less unfounded,—as the sole case in which he afforded any thing like *real* grounds for such an accusation did not take place till *after* the period of the separation.

Not content with such ordinary and tangible charges, the tongue of rumour was emboldened to proceed still further; and, presuming upon the mysterious silence maintained by one of the parties,

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on which these articles of impeachment against his sanity were drawn up, was an act of violence committed by him on a favourite old watch that had been his companion from boyhood, and had gone with him to Greece. In a fit of vexation and rage, brought on by some of those humiliating embarrassments to which he was now almost daily a prey, he furiously dashed this watch upon the hearth, and ground it to pieces among the ashes with the poker.

ventured to throw out dark hints and vague insinuations, of which the fancy of every hearer was left to fill up the outline as he pleased. In consequence of all this exaggeration, such an outcry was now raised against Lord Byron as, in no case of private life, perhaps, was ever before witnessed; nor had the whole amount of fame which he had gathered, in the course of the last four years, much exceeded in proportion the reproach and obloquy that were now, within the space of a few weeks, showered upon him. In addition to the many who, no doubt, conscientiously believed and reprobated what they had but too much right, whether viewing him as poet or man of fashion, to consider credible excesses, there were also actively on the alert that large class of persons who seem to hold violence against the vices of others to be equivalent to virtue in themselves, together with all those natural haters of success who, having long sickened under the splendour of the *poet*, were now enabled, in the guise of champions for innocence, to wreak their spite on the *man*. In every various form of paragraph, pamphlet, and caricature, both his character and person were held up to odium *; —

* Of the abuse lavished upon him, the following extract from a poem, published at this time, will give some idea: —

" From native England, that endured too long
The ceaseless burden of his impious song;
His mad career of crimes and follies run,
And grey in vice, when life was scarce begun;
He goes, in foreign lands prepared to find
A life more suited to his guilty mind;
Where other climes new pleasures may supply
For that pall'd taste, and that unhallow'd eye; —

hardly a voice was raised, or at least listened to, in his behalf; and though a few faithful friends remained unshaken by his side, the utter hopelessness of stemming the torrent was felt as well by them as by himself, and, after an effort or two to gain a fair hearing, they submitted in silence. Among the few attempts made by himself towards confuting his calumniators was an appeal (such as the following short letter contains) to some of those persons with whom he had been in the habit of living familiarly.

LETTER 235. TO MR. ROGERS.

"March 25. 1816.

"You are one of the few persons with whom I have lived in what is called intimacy, and have heard me at times conversing on the untoward topic of my recent family disquietudes. Will you have the goodness to say to me at once, whether you ever heard me speak of her with disrespect, with unkindness, or defending myself at *her* expense by any serious imputation of any description against

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Wisely he seeks some yet untrodden shore,
For those who know him less may prize him more."

In a rhyming pamphlet, too, entitled "A Poetical Epistle from Delia, addressed to Lord Byron," the writer thus charitably expresses herself: —

"Hopeless of peace below, and, shuddering thought!
Far from that Heav'n, denied, if never sought,
Thy light a beacon — a reproach thy name —
Thy memory "damn'd to everlasting fame,"
Shunn'd by the wise, admired by fools alone —
The good shall mourn thee — and the Muse disown."

her? Did you never hear me say 'that when there was a right or a wrong, she had the *right?*' — The reason I put these questions to you or others of my friends is, because I am said, by her and hers, to have resorted to such means of exculpation.

"Ever very truly yours,

"B."

In those Memoirs (or, more properly, Memoranda,) of the noble poet, which it was thought expedient, for various reasons, to sacrifice, he gave a detailed account of all the circumstances connected with his marriage, from the first proposal to the lady till his own departure, after the breach, from England. In truth, though the title of "Memoirs," which he himself sometimes gave to that manuscript, conveys the idea of a complete and regular piece of biography, it was to this particular portion of his life that the work was principally devoted; while the anecdotes, having reference to other parts of his career, not only occupied a very disproportionate space in its pages, but were most of them such as are found repeated in the various Journals and other MSS. he left behind. The chief charm, indeed, of that narrative, was the melancholy playfulness — melancholy, from the wounded feeling so visible through its pleasantry — with which events unimportant and persons uninteresting, in almost every respect but their connection with such a man's destiny, were detailed and described in it. Frank, as usual, throughout, in his avowal of his own errors, and generously just towards her who was his fellow-

sufferer in the strife, the impression his recital left on the minds of all who perused it was, to say the least, favourable to him; — though, upon the whole, leading to a persuasion, which I have already intimated to be my own, that, neither in kind nor degree, did the causes of disunion between the parties much differ from those that loosen the links of most such marriages.

With respect to the details themselves, though all important in his own eyes at the time, as being connected with the subject that superseded most others in his thoughts, the interest they would possess for others, now that their first zest as a subject of scandal is gone by, and the greater number of the persons to whom they relate forgotten, would be too slight to justify me in entering upon them more particularly, or running the risk of any offence that might be inflicted by their disclosure. As far as the character of the illustrious subject of these pages is concerned, I feel that Time and Justice are doing far more in its favour than could be effected by any such gossiping details. During the lifetime of a man of genius, the world is but too much inclined to judge of him rather by what he wants than by what he possesses, and even where conscious, as in the present case, that his defects are among the sources of his greatness, to require of him unreasonably the one without the other. If Pope had not been splenetic and irritable, we should have wanted his Satires; and an impetuous temperament, and passions untamed, were indispensable to the conformation of a poet like Byron. It is by posterity only that full justice is

rendered to those who have paid such hard penalties to reach it. The dross that had once hung about the ore drops away, and the infirmities, and even miseries, of genius are forgotten in its greatness. Who now asks whether Dante was right or wrong in his matrimonial differences? or by how many of those whose fancies dwell fondly on his Beatrice is even the name of his Gemma Donati remembered?

Already, short as has been the interval since Lord Byron's death, the charitable influence of time in softening, if not rescinding, the harsh judgments of the world against genius is visible. The utter unreasonableness of trying such a character by ordinary standards, or of expecting to find the materials of order and happiness in a bosom constantly heaving forth from its depths such "lava floods," is — now that his spirit has passed from among us — felt and acknowledged. In reviewing the circumstances of his marriage, a more even scale of justice is held; and while every tribute of sympathy and commiseration is accorded to her, who, unluckily for her own peace, became involved in such a destiny, — who, with virtues and attainments that would have made the home of a more ordinary man happy, undertook, in evil hour, to "turn and wind a fiery Pegasus," and but failed where it may be doubted whether even the fittest for such a task would have succeeded, — full allowance is, at the same time, made for the great martyr of genius himself, whom so many other causes, beside that restless fire within him, concurred to unsettle in mind and (as he himself feelingly expresses it) "disqualify for comfort;"—

whose doom it was to be either thus or less great, and whom to have tamed might have been to extinguish; there never, perhaps, having existed an individual to whom, whether as author or man, the following line was more applicable: —

"Si non errâsset, fecerat ille minus." *

While these events were going on, — events, of which his memory and heart bore painfully the traces through the remainder of his short life, — some occurrences took place, connected with his literary history, to which it is a relief to divert the attention of the reader from the distressing subject that has now so long detained us.

The letter that follows was in answer to one received from Mr. Murray, in which that gentleman had enclosed him a draft for a thousand guineas for the copyright of his two poems, The Siege of Corinth and Parisina: —

LETTER 236. TO MR. MURRAY.

"January 3. 1816.

"Your offer is *liberal* in the extreme, (you see I use the word *to* you and *of* you, though I would not consent to your using it of yourself to Mr. * * * *,) and much more than the two poems can possibly be worth; but I cannot accept it, nor will not. You are most welcome to them as additions to the collected volumes, without any demand or expectation on my part whatever. But I cannot consent to their separate publication. I do not like to risk any fame

* Had he not *erred*, he had far less achieved.

(whether merited or not), which I have been favoured with, upon compositions which I do not feel to be at all equal to my own notions of what they should be, (and as I flatter myself some *have been*, here and there,) though they may do very well as things without pretension, to add to the publication with the lighter pieces.

"I am very glad that the handwriting was a favourable omen of the *morale* of the piece: but you must not trust to that, for my copyist would write out any thing I desired in all the ignorance of innocence — I hope, however, in this instance, with no great peril to either.

"P. S. I have enclosed your draft *torn*, for fear of accidents by the way — I wish you would not throw temptation in mine. It is not from a disdain of the universal idol, nor from a present superfluity of his treasures, I can assure you, that I refuse to worship him; but what is right is right, and must not yield to circumstances."

Notwithstanding the ruinous state of his pecuniary affairs, the resolution which the poet had formed not to avail himself of the profits of his works still continued to be held sacred by him; and the sum thus offered for the copyright of The Siege of Corinth and Parisina was, as we see, refused and left untouched in the publisher's hands. It happened that, at this time, a well-known and eminent writer on political science had been, by some misfortune, reduced to pecuniary embarrassment; and the circumstance having become known to Mr. Rogers and Sir James Mackin-

tosh, it occurred to them that a part of the sum thus unappropriated by Lord Byron could not be better bestowed than in relieving the necessities of this gentleman. The suggestion was no sooner conveyed to the noble poet than he proceeded to act upon it; and the following letter to Mr. Rogers refers to his intentions: —

LETTER 237. TO MR. ROGERS.

" February 20. 1816.

" I wrote to you hastily this morning by Murray, to say that I was glad to do as Mackintosh and you suggested about Mr. * *. It occurs to me now, that as I have never seen Mr. * * but once, and consequently have no claim to his acquaintance, that you or Sir J. had better arrange it with him in such a manner as may be least offensive to his feelings, and so as not to have the appearance of officiousness nor obtrusion on my part. I hope you will be able to do this, as I should be very sorry to do any thing by him that may be deemed indelicate. The sum Murray offered and offers was and is one thousand and fifty pounds: — this I refused before, because I thought it more than the two things were worth to Murray, and from other objections, which are of no consequence. I have, however, closed with M., in consequence of Sir J.'s and your suggestion, and propose the sum of six hundred pounds to be transferred to Mr. * * in such a manner as may seem best to your friend, — the remainder I think of for other purposes.

" As Murray has offered the money down for the copyrights, it may be done directly. I am ready to

sign and seal immediately, and perhaps it had better not be delayed. I shall feel very glad if it can be of any use to * *; only don't let him be plagued, nor think himself obliged and all that, which makes people hate one another, &c. Yours, very truly,

"B."

In his mention here of other "purposes," he refers to an intention which he had of dividing the residue of the sum between two other gentlemen of literary celebrity, equally in want of such aid, Mr. Maturin and Mr. * *. The whole design, however, though entered into with the utmost sincerity on the part of the noble poet, ultimately failed. Mr. Murray, who was well acquainted with the straits to which Lord Byron himself had been reduced, and foresaw that a time might come when even money thus gained would be welcome to him, on learning the uses to which the sum was to be applied, demurred in advancing it, — alleging that, though bound not only by his word but his will to pay the amount to Lord Byron, he did not conceive himself called upon to part with it to others. How earnestly the noble poet himself, though with executions, at the time, impending over his head, endeavoured to urge the point, will appear from the following letter: —

LETTER 238. TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 22. 1816.

"When the sum offered by you, and even *pressed* by you, was declined, it was with reference to a separate publication, as you know and I know. That it

was large, I admitted and admit; and *that* made part of my consideration in refusing it, till I knew better what you were likely to make of it. With regard to what is past, or is to pass, about Mr. M * *, the case is in no respect different from the transfer of former copyrights to Mr. Dallas. Had I taken you at your word, that is, taken your money, I might have used it as I pleased; and it could be in no respect different to you whether I paid it to a w——, or a hospital, or assisted a man of talent in distress. The truth of the matter seems this: you offered more than the poems are worth. I *said* so, and I *think* so; but you know, or at least ought to know, your own business best; and when you recollect what passed between you and me upon pecuniary subjects before this occurred, you will acquit me of any wish to take advantage of your imprudence.

"The things in question shall not be published at all, and there is an end of the matter.

"Yours," &c.

The letter that follows will give some idea of those embarrassments in his own affairs, under the pressure of which he could be thus considerate of the wants of others.

LETTER 239. TO MR. MURRAY.

"March 6. 1816.

"I sent to you to-day for this reason—the books you purchased are again seized, and, as matters stand, had much better be sold at once by public

auction. * I wish to see you to return your bill for them, which, thank God, is neither due nor paid. *That* part, as far as *you* are concerned, being settled, (which it can be, and shall be, when I see you to-morrow,) I have no further delicacy about the matter. This is about the tenth execution in as many months; so I am pretty well hardened; but it is fit I should pay the forfeit of my forefathers' extravagance and my own; and whatever my faults may be, I suppose they will be pretty well expiated in time — or eternity. Ever, &c.

" P. S. I need hardly say that I knew nothing till this *day* of the new *seizure*. I had released them from former ones, and thought, when you took them, that they were yours.

" You shall have your bill again to-morrow."

* The sale of these books took place the following month, and they were described in the catalogue as the property of " a Nobleman about to leave England on a tour."

From a note to Mr. Murray, it would appear that he had been first announced as going to the Morea.

" I hope that the catalogue of the books, &c., has not been published without my seeing it. I must reserve several, and many ought not to be printed. The advertisement is a very bad one. I am not going to the *Morea;* and if I was, you might as well advertise a man in Russia as going to *Yorkshire*. — Ever," &c.

Together with the books was sold an article of furniture, which is now in the possession of Mr. Murray, namely, " a large screen covered with portraits of actors, pugilists, representations of boxing-matches," &c.

During the month of January and part of February, his poems of The Siege of Corinth and Parisina were in the hands of the printers, and about the end of the latter month made their appearance. The following letters are the only ones I find connected with their publication.

LETTER 240. TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 3. 1816.

"I sent for 'Marmion,' which I return, because it occurred to me, there might be a resemblance between part of 'Parisina' and a similar scene in Canto 2d of 'Marmion.' I fear there is, though I never thought of it before, and could hardly wish to imitate that which is inimitable. I wish you would ask Mr. Gifford whether I ought to say any thing upon it;—I had completed the story on the passage from Gibbon, which indeed leads to a like scene naturally, without a thought of the kind: but it comes upon me not very comfortably.

"There are a few words and phrases I want to alter in the MS., and should like to do it before you print, and will return it in an hour.

"Yours ever."

LETTER 241. TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 20. 1816.

"To return to *our* business — your epistles are vastly agreeable. With regard to the observations on carelessness, &c. I think, with all humility, that

the gentle reader has considered a rather uncommon, and designedly irregular, versification for haste and negligence. The measure is not that of any of the other poems, which (I believe) were allowed to be tolerably correct, according to Byshe and the fingers — or ears — by which bards write, and readers reckon. Great part of 'The Siege' is in (I think) what the learned call Anapests, (though I am not sure, being heinously forgetful of my metres and my 'Gradus',) and many of the lines intentionally longer or shorter than its rhyming companion; and rhyme also occurring at greater or less intervals of caprice or convenience.

"I mean not to say that this is right or good, but merely that I could have been smoother, had it appeared to me of advantage; and that I was not otherwise without being aware of the deviation, though I now feel sorry for it, as I would undoubtedly rather please than not. My wish has been to try at something different from my former efforts; as I endeavoured to make them differ from each other. The versification of 'The Corsair' is not that of 'Lara;' nor 'The Giaour' that of 'The Bride;' Childe Harold is again varied from these; and I strove to vary the last somewhat from *all* of the others.

"Excuse all this d—d nonsense and egotism. The fact is, that I am rather trying to think on the subject of this note, than really thinking on it. — I did not know you had called: you are always admitted and welcome when you choose.

"Yours, &c. &c.

"P. S. You need not be in any apprehension or grief on my account: were I to be beaten down by the world and its inheritors, I should have succumbed to many things, years ago. You must not mistake my *not* bullying for dejection; nor imagine that because I feel, I am to faint: — but enough for the present.

"I am sorry for Sotheby's row. What the devil is it about? I thought it all settled; and if I can do any thing about him or Ivan still, I am ready and willing. I do not think it proper for me just now to be much behind the scenes, but I will see the committee and move upon it, if Sotheby likes.

"If you see Mr. Sotheby, will you tell him that I wrote to Mr. Coleridge, on getting Mr. Sotheby's note, and have, I hope, done what Mr. S. wished on that subject?"

It was about the middle of April that his two celebrated copies of verses, "Fare thee well," and "A Sketch," made their appearance in the newspapers: — and while the latter poem was generally and, it must be owned, justly condemned, as a sort of literary assault on an obscure female, whose situation ought to have placed her as much *beneath* his satire as the undignified mode of his attack certainly raised her *above* it, with regard to the other poem, opinions were a good deal more divided. To many it appeared a strain of true conjugal tenderness, a kind of appeal, which no woman with a heart could resist: while by others, on the contrary, it was considered to be a mere showy effusion of sentiment, as difficult

for real feeling to have produced as it was easy for fancy and art, and altogether unworthy of the deep interests involved in the subject. To this latter opinion, I confess my own to have, at first, strongly inclined; and suspicious as I could not help regarding the sentiment that could, at such a moment, indulge in such verses, the taste that prompted or sanctioned their publication appeared to me even still more questionable. On reading, however, his own account of all the circumstances in the Memoranda, I found that on both points I had, in common with a large portion of the public, done him injustice. He there described, and in a manner whose sincerity there was no doubting, the swell of tender recollections under the influence of which, as he sat one night musing in his study, these stanzas were produced, — the tears, as he said, falling fast over the paper as he wrote them. Neither, from that account, did it appear to have been from any wish or intention of his own, but through the injudicious zeal of a friend whom he had suffered to take a copy, that the verses met the public eye.

The appearance of these poems gave additional violence to the angry and inquisitorial feeling now abroad against him; and the title under which both pieces were immediately announced by various publishers, as "Poems by Lord Byron on his domestic Circumstances," carried with it a sufficient exposure of the utter unfitness of such themes for rhyme. It is, indeed, only in those emotions and passions, of which imagination forms a predominant ingredient, —such as love, in its first dreams, before reality has

come to embody or dispel them, or sorrow, in its wane, when beginning to pass away from the heart into the fancy, — that poetry ought ever to be employed as an interpreter of feeling. For the expression of all those immediate affections and disquietudes that have their root in the actual realities of life, the art of the poet, from the very circumstance of its being an art, as well as from the coloured form in which it is accustomed to transmit impressions, cannot be otherwise than a medium as false as it is feeble.

To so very low an ebb had the industry of his assailants now succeeded in reducing his private character, that it required no small degree of courage, even among that class who are supposed to be the most tolerant of domestic irregularities, to invite him into their society. One distinguished lady of fashion, however, ventured so far as, on the eve of his departure from England, to make a party for him expressly; and nothing short, perhaps, of that high station in society which a life as blameless as it is brilliant has secured to her, could have placed beyond all reach of misrepresentation, at that moment, such a compliment to one marked with the world's censure so deeply. At this assembly of Lady J**'s he made his last appearance, publicly, in England; and the amusing account given of some of the company in his Memoranda, — of the various and characteristic ways in which the temperature of their manner towards him was affected by the cloud under which he now appeared, — was one of the passages of that Memoir it would have been most desirable, perhaps, to have preserved; though, from being a

gallery of sketches, all personal and many satirical, but a small portion of it, if any, could have been presented to the public till a time when the originals had long left the scene, and any interest they might once have excited was gone with themselves. Besides the noble hostess herself, whose kindness to him, on this occasion, he never forgot, there was also one other person (then Miss M * *, now Lady K * *,) whose frank and fearless cordiality to him on that evening he most gratefully commemorated,—adding, in acknowledgment of a still more generous service, "She is a high-minded woman, and showed me more friendship than I deserved from her. I heard also of her having defended me in a large company, which *at that time* required more courage and firmness than most women possess."

As we are now approaching so near the close of his London life, I shall here throw together the few remaining recollections of that period with which the gleanings of his Memorandum-book, so often referred to, furnish me.

"I liked the Dandies; they were always very civil to *me*, though in general they disliked literary people, and persecuted and mystified Madame de Staël, Lewis, * * * *, and the like, damnably. They persuaded Madame de Staël that A * * had a hundred thousand a year, &c. &c., till she praised him to his *face* for his *beauty!* and made a set at him for * *, and a hundred fooleries besides. The truth is, that, though I gave up the business early,

I had a tinge of dandyism * in my minority, and probably retained enough of it to conciliate the great ones at five-and-twenty. I had gamed, and drank, and taken my degrees in most dissipations, and having no pedantry, and not being overbearing, we ran quietly together. I knew them all more or less, and they made me a member of Watier's (a superb club at that time), being, I take it, the only literary man (except *two others*, both men of the world, Moore and Spenser,) in it. Our masquerade† was a grand one; so was the dandy-ball too, at the Argyle, but *that* (the latter) was given by the four chiefs, B., M., A., and P., if I err not.

"I was a member of the Alfred, too, being elected while in Greece. It was pleasant; a little too sober and literary, and bored with * * and Sir Francis D'Ivernois; but one met Peel, and Ward, and Valentia, and many other pleasant or known people; and it was, upon the whole, a decent resource in a rainy day, in a dearth of parties, or parliament, or in an empty season.

"I belonged, or belong, to the following clubs or societies:—to the Alfred; to the Cocoa Tree; to

* Petrarch was, it appears, also in his youth, a Dandy. "Recollect," he says, in a letter to his brother, "the time, when we wore white habits, on which the least spot, or a plait ill placed, would have been a subject of grief; when our shoes were so tight we suffered martyrdom," &c.

† To this masquerade he went in the habit of a Caloyer, or Eastern monk,—a dress particularly well calculated to set off the beauty of his fine countenance, which was accordingly, that night, the subject of general admiration.

Watier's; to the Union; to Racket's (at Brighton); to the Pugilistic; to the Owls, or "Fly-by-night;" to the *Cambridge* Whig Club; to the Harrow Club, Cambridge; and to one or two private clubs; to the Hampden (political) Club; and to the Italian Carbonari, &c. &c., 'though last, *not least.*' I got into all these, and never stood for any other—at least to my own knowledge. I declined being proposed to several others, though pressed to stand candidate."

"When I met H ** L **, the gaoler, at Lord Holland's, before he sailed for St. Helena, the discourse turned upon the battle of Waterloo. I asked him whether the dispositions of Napoleon were those of a great general? He answered, disparagingly, 'that they were very *simple.*' I had always thought that a degree of simplicity was an ingredient of greatness."

"I was much struck with the simplicity of Grattan's manners in private life; they were odd, but they were natural. Curran used to take him off, bowing to the very ground, and 'thanking God that he had no peculiarities of gesture or appearance,' in a way irresistibly ludicrous; and ** used to call him a 'Sentimental Harlequin.'"

"Curran! Curran's the man who struck me most.* Such imagination! there never was any

* In his Memoranda there were equally enthusiastic praises of Curran. "The riches," said he, "of his Irish imagination were exhaustless. I have heard that man speak more poetry

thing like it that ever I saw or heard of. His *published* life — his published speeches, give you *no* idea of the man — none at all. He was a *machine* of imagination, as some one said that Piron was an epigrammatic machine.

" I did not see a great deal of Curran — only in 1813; but I met him at home (for he used to call on me), and in society, at Mackintosh's, Holland House, &c. &c. and he was wonderful even to me, who had seen many remarkable men of the time."

" * * * (commonly called *long* * * *, a very clever man, but odd) complained of our friend Scrope B. Davies, in riding, that he had a *stitch* in his side. ' I don't wonder at it,' said Scrope, ' for you ride *like a tailor*.' Whoever had seen * * * on horseback, with his very tall figure on a small nag, would not deny the justice of the repartee."

" When B * * was obliged (by that affair of poor M * *, who thence acquired the name of ' Dick the

than I have ever seen written, — though I saw him seldom and but occasionally. I saw him presented to Madame de Staël at Mackintosh's; — it was the grand confluence between the Rhone and the Saone, and they were both so d—d ugly, that I could not help wondering how the best intellects of France and Ireland could have taken up respectively such residences."

In another part, however, he was somewhat more fair to Madame de Staël's personal appearance: — " Her figure was not bad; her legs tolerable; her arms good. Altogether, I can conceive her having been a desirable woman, allowing a little imagination for her soul, and so forth. She would have made a great man."

Dandy-killer' — it was about money, and debt, and all that) to retire to France, he knew no French, and having obtained a grammar for the purpose of study, our friend Scrope Davies was asked what progress Brummell had made in French; he responded, 'that Brummell had been stopped, like Buonaparte in Russia, by the *Elements*.'

"I have put this pun into Beppo, which is 'a fair exchange and no robbery;' for Scrope made his fortune at several dinners (as he owned himself) by repeating occasionally, as his own, some of the buffooneries with which I had encountered him in the morning."

"* * * is a good man, rhymes well (if not wisely), but is a bore. He seizes you by the button. One night of a rout, at Mrs. Hope's, he had fastened upon me, notwithstanding my symptoms of manifest distress, (for I was in love, and had just nicked a minute when neither mothers, nor husbands, nor rivals, nor gossips, were near my then idol, who was beautiful as the statues of the gallery where we stood at the time,) — * * *, I say, had seized upon me by the button and the heart-strings, and spared neither. W. Spencer, who likes fun, and don't dislike mischief, saw my case, and coming up to us both, took me by the hand, and pathetically bade me farewell; 'for,' said he, 'I see it is all over with you.' * * * then went away. *Sic me servavit Apollo.*"

"I remember seeing Blucher in the London assemblies, and never saw any thing of his age less

venerable. With the voice and manners of a recruiting sergeant, he pretended to the honours of a hero, — just as if a stone could be worshipped because a man had stumbled over it."

We now approach the close of this eventful period of his history. In a note to Mr. Rogers, written a short time before his departure for Ostend*, he says, — "My sister is now with me, and leaves town to-morrow; we shall not meet again for some time, at all events — if ever; and, under these circumstances, I trust to stand excused to you and Mr. Sheridan for being unable to wait upon him this evening."

This was his last interview with his sister, — almost the only person from whom he now parted with regret; it being, as he said, doubtful *which* had given him most pain, the enemies who attacked or the friends who condoled with him. Those beautiful and most tender verses, "Though the day of my destiny's over," were now his parting tribute to her † who, through all this bitter trial, had been his sole consolation; and, though known to most readers, so expressive are they of his wounded feelings at this crisis, that there are few, I think, who will object to seeing some stanzas of them here.

"Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain — it shall not be its slave.

* Dated April 16.

† It will be seen, from a subsequent letter, that the first stanza of that most cordial of Farewells, "My boat is on the shore," was also written at this time.

There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn —
They may torture, but shall not subdue me —
'Tis of *thee* that I think — not of them.

" Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though lov'd, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake,
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor mute, that the world might belie.

" From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*."

On a scrap of paper, in his handwriting, dated April 14. 1816, I find the following list of his attendants, with an annexed outline of his projected tour: —" *Servants*, —— Berger, a Swiss, William Fletcher, and Robert Rushton. — John William Polidori, M. D. — Switzerland, Flanders, Italy, and (perhaps) France." The two English servants, it will be observed, were the same " yeoman" and " page" who had set out with him on his youthful travels in 1809; and now, — for the second and last time taking leave of his country, — on the 25th of April he sailed for Ostend.

The circumstances under which Lord Byron now took leave of England were such as, in the case of any ordinary person, could not be considered otherwise than disastrous and humiliating. He had, in the course of one short year, gone through every variety of domestic misery; — had seen his hearth eight or nine times profaned by the visitations of the law, and been only saved from a prison by the privileges of his rank. He had alienated, as far as they had ever been his, the affections of his wife; and now, rejected by her, and condemned by the world, was betaking himself to an exile which had not even the dignity of appearing voluntary, as the excommunicating voice of society seemed to leave him no other resource. Had he been of that class of unfeeling and self-satisfied natures from whose hard surface the reproaches of others fall pointless, he might have found in insensibility a sure refuge against reproach; but, on the contrary, the same sensitiveness that kept him so awake to the applauses of mankind, rendered him, in a still more intense degree, alive to their censure. Even the strange, perverse pleasure which he felt in painting himself unamiably to the world did not prevent him from being both startled and pained when the world took him at his word; and, like a child in a mask before a looking-glass, the dark semblance which he had, half in sport, put on, when reflected back upon him from the mirror of public opinion, shocked even himself.

Thus surrounded by vexations, and thus deeply feeling them, it is not too much to say, that any

other spirit but his own would have sunk under the struggle, and lost, perhaps irrecoverably, that level of self-esteem which alone affords a stand against the shocks of fortune. But in him, — furnished as was his mind with reserves of strength, waiting to be called out, — the very intensity of the pressure brought relief by the proportionate re-action which it produced. Had his transgressions and frailties been visited with no more than their due portion of punishment, there can be little doubt that a very different result would have ensued. Not only would such an excitement have been insufficient to waken up the new energies still dormant in him, but that consciousness of his own errors, which was for ever livelily present in his mind, would, under such circumstances, have been left, undisturbed by any unjust provocation, to work its usual softening and, perhaps, humbling influences on his spirit. But, — luckily, as it proved, for the further triumphs of his genius, — no such moderation was exercised. The storm of invective raised around him, so utterly out of proportion with his offences, and the base calumnies that were every where heaped upon his name, left to his wounded pride no other resource than in the same summoning up of strength, the same instinct of resistance to injustice, which had first forced out the energies of his youthful genius, and was now destined to give a still bolder and loftier range to its powers.

It was, indeed, not without truth, said of him by Goethe, that he was inspired by the Genius of Pain; for, from the first to the last of his agitated career,

every fresh recruitment of his faculties was imbibed from that bitter source. His chief incentive, when a boy, to distinction was, as we have seen, that mark of deformity on his person, by an acute sense of which he was first stung into the ambition of being great.* As, with an evident reference to his own fate, he himself describes the feeling, —

> " Deformity is daring.
> It is its essence to o'ertake mankind
> By heart and soul, and make itself the equal, —
> Ay, the superior of the rest. There is
> A spur in its halt movements, to become
> All that the others cannot, in such things
> As still are free to both, to compensate
> For stepdame Nature's avarice at first." †

Then came the disappointment of his youthful passion, — the lassitude and remorse of premature excess, — the lone friendlessness of his entrance into life, and the ruthless assault upon his first literary efforts, — all links in that chain of trials, errors, and sufferings, by which his great mind was gradually and painfully drawn out; — all bearing their respective shares in accomplishing that destiny which seems to have decreed that the triumphal march of

* In one of his letters to Mr. Hunt, he declares it to be his own opinion that " an addiction to poetry is very generally the result of ' an uneasy mind in an uneasy body;' disease or deformity," he adds, " have been the attendants of many of our best. Collins mad — Chatterton, *I* think, mad — Cowper mad — Pope crooked — Milton blind," &c. &c.

† The Deformed Transformed.

his genius should be over the waste and ruins of his heart. He appeared, indeed, himself to have had an instinctive consciousness that it was out of such ordeals his strength and glory were to arise, as his whole life was passed in courting agitation and difficulties; and whenever the scenes around him were too tame to furnish such excitement, he flew to fancy or memory for "thorns" whereon to "lean his breast."

But the greatest of his trials, as well as triumphs, was yet to come. The last stage of this painful, though glorious, course, in which fresh power was, at every step, wrung from out his soul, was that at which we are now arrived, his marriage and its results, — without which, dear as was the price paid by him in peace and character, his career would have been incomplete, and the world still left in ignorance of the full compass of his genius. It is, indeed, worthy of remark, that it was not till his domestic circumstances began to darken around him that his fancy, which had long been idle, again rose upon the wing, — both The Siege of Corinth and Parisina having been produced but a short time before the separation. How conscious he was, too, that the turmoil which followed was the true element of his restless spirit, may be collected from several passages of his letters at that period, in one of which he even mentions that his health had become all the better for the conflict: — "It is odd," he says, "but agitation or contest of any kind gives a rebound to my spirits, and sets me up for the time."

This buoyancy it was, — this irrepressible spring

of mind, — that now enabled him to bear up not only against the assaults of others, but, what was still more difficult, against his own thoughts and feelings. The muster of all his mental resources to which, in self-defence, he had been driven, but opened to him the yet undreamed extent and capacity of his powers, and inspired him with a proud confidence that he should yet shine down these calumnious mists, convert censure to wonder, and compel even those who could not approve to admire.

The route which he now took, through Flanders and by the Rhine, is best traced in his own matchless verses, which leave a portion of their glory on all that they touch, and lend to scenes, already clothed with immortality by nature and by history, the no less durable associations of undying song. On his leaving Brussels, an incident occurred which would be hardly worth relating, were it not for the proof it affords of the malicious assiduity with which every thing to his disadvantage was now caught up and circulated in England. Mr. Pryce Gordon, a gentleman, who appears to have seen a good deal of him during his short stay at Brussels, thus relates the anecdote: —

" Lord Byron travelled in a huge coach, copied from the celebrated one of Napoleon, taken at Genappe, with additions. Besides a *lit de repos*, it contained a library, a plate-chest, and every apparatus for dining in it. It was not, however, found sufficiently capacious for his baggage and suite; and he purchased a calèche at Brussels for his servants. It broke down going to Waterloo, and I advised him

to return it, as it seemed to be a crazy machine; but as he had made a deposit of forty Napoleons (certainly double its value), the honest Fleming would not consent to restore the cash, or take back his packing case, except under a forfeiture of thirty Napoleons. As his Lordship was to set out the following day, he begged me to make the best arrangement I could in the affair. He had no sooner taken his departure, than the worthy *sellier* inserted a paragraph in 'The Brussels Oracle,' stating 'that the noble *milor Anglais* had absconded with his calèche, value 1800 francs!'"

In the Courier of May 13., the Brussels account of this transaction is thus copied: —

"The following is an extract from the Dutch Mail, dated Brussels, May 8th: — In the Journal de Belgique, of this date, is a petition from a coachmaker at Brussels to the president of the Tribunal de Premier Instance, stating that he has sold to Lord Byron a carriage, &c. for 1882 francs, of which he has received 847 francs, but that his Lordship, who is going away the same day, refuses to pay him the remaining 1035 francs; he begs permission to seize the carriage, &c. This being granted, he put it into the hands of a proper officer, who went to signify the above to Lord Byron, and was informed by the landlord of the hotel that his Lordship was gone without having given him any thing to pay the debt, on which the officer seized a chaise belonging to his Lordship as security for the amount."

It was not till the beginning of the following month that a contradiction of this falsehood, stating

the real circumstances of the case, as above related, was communicated to the Morning Chronicle, in a letter from Brussels, signed "Pryce L. Gordon."

Another anecdote, of far more interest, has been furnished from the same respectable source. It appears that the two first stanzas of the verses relating to Waterloo, "Stop, for thy tread is on an empire's dust *," were written at Brussels, after a visit to that memorable field, and transcribed by Lord Byron, next morning, in an album belonging to the lady of the gentleman who communicates the anecdote.

"A few weeks after he had written them (says the relater), the well-known artist, R. R. Reinagle, a friend of mine, arrived in Brussels, when I invited him to dine with me and showed him the lines, requesting him to embellish them with an appropriate vignette to the following passage: —

"'Here his last flight the haughty eagle flew,
Then tore, with bloody beak, the fatal plain;
Pierced with the shafts of banded nations through,
Ambition's life, and labours, all were vain —
He wears the shatter'd links of the world's broken chain.'

Mr. Reinagle sketched with a pencil a spirited chained eagle, grasping the earth with his talons.

"I had occasion to write to his Lordship, and mentioned having got this clever artist to draw a vignette to his beautiful lines, and the liberty he had taken

* Childe Harold, Canto iii. stanza 17.

by altering the action of the eagle. In reply to this, he wrote to me, — ' Reinagle is a better poet and a better ornithologist than I am; eagles, and all birds of prey, attack with their talons, and not with their beaks, and I have altered the line thus: —

" ' Then tore, with bloody talon, the rent plain.'

This is, I think, a better line, besides its poetical justice.' I need hardly add, when I communicated this flattering compliment to the painter, that he was highly gratified."

From Brussels the noble traveller pursued his course along the Rhine, — a line of road which he has strewed over with all the riches of poesy; and, arriving at Geneva, took up his abode at the well-known hotel, Sécheron. After a stay of a few weeks at this place, he removed to a villa, in the neighbourhood, called Diodati, very beautifully situated on the high banks of the Lake, where he established his residence for the remainder of the summer.

I shall now give the few letters in my possession written by him at this time, and then subjoin to them such anecdotes as I have been able to collect relative to the same period.

LETTER 242. TO MR. MURRAY.

" Ouchy, near Lausanne, June 27. 1816.

" I am thus far (kept by stress of weather) on my way back to Diodati (near Geneva) from a voyage in my boat round the Lake; and I enclose you a sprig of *Gibbon's acacia* and some rose-leaves from his garden, which, with part of his house, I have just seen.

You will find honourable mention, in his Life, made of this 'acacia,' when he walked out on the night of concluding his history. The garden and *summer-house*, where he composed, are neglected, and the last utterly decayed; but they still show it as his 'cabinet,' and seem perfectly aware of his memory.

"My route, through Flanders, and by the Rhine, to Switzerland, was all I expected, and more.

"I have traversed all Rousseau's ground with the Heloise before me, and am struck to a degree that I cannot express with the force and accuracy of his descriptions and the beauty of their reality. Meillerie, Clarens, and Vevay, and the Château de Chillon, are places of which I shall say little, because all I could say must fall short of the impressions they stamp.

"Three days ago, we were most nearly wrecked in a squall off Meillerie, and driven to shore. I ran no risk, being so near the rocks, and a good swimmer; but our party were wet, and incommoded a good deal. The wind was strong enough to blow down some trees, as we found at landing: however, all is righted and right, and we are thus far on our return.

"Dr. Polidori is not here, but at Diodati, left behind in hospital with a sprained ankle, which he acquired in tumbling from a wall — he can't jump.

"I shall be glad to hear you are well, and have received for me certain helms and swords, sent from Waterloo, which I rode over with pain and pleasure.

"I have finished a third canto of Childe Harold (consisting of one hundred and seventeen stanzas),

longer than either of the two former, and in some parts, it may be, better; but of course on that I cannot determine. I shall send it by the first safe-looking opportunity. Ever," &c.

LETTER 243. TO MR. MURRAY.

" Diodati, near Geneva, July 22. 1816.

" I wrote to you a few weeks ago, and Dr. Polidori received your letter; but the packet has not made its appearance, nor the epistle, of which you gave notice therein. I enclose you an advertisement *, which was copied by Dr. Polidori, and which appears to be about the most impudent imposition that ever issued from Grub Street. I need hardly say that I know nothing of all this trash, nor whence it may spring, — ' Odes to St. Helena,' — ' Farewells to England,' &c. &c. — and if it can be disavowed, or is worth disavowing, you have full authority to do so. I never wrote, nor conceived, a line on any thing of the kind, any more than of two other things with which I was saddled — something about ' Gaul,' and another about ' Mrs. La Valette;' and as to the

* The following was the advertisement enclosed: —

" Neatly printed and hot-pressed, 2s. 6d.

" Lord Byron's Farewell to England, with Three other Poems — Ode to St. Helena, to My Daughter on her Birthday, and To the Lily of France.

" Printed by J. Johnston, Cheapside, 335.; Oxford, 9.

" The above beautiful Poems will be read with the most lively interest, as it is probable they will be the last of the author's that will appear in England."

'Lily of France,' I should as soon think of celebrating a turnip. 'On the Morning of my Daughter's Birth,' I had other things to think of than verses; and should never have dreamed of such an invention, till Mr. Johnston and his pamphlet's advertisement broke in upon me with a new light on the crafts and subtleties of the demon of printing, — or rather publishing.

"I did hope that some succeeding lie would have superseded the thousand and one which were accumulated during last winter. I can forgive whatever may be said of or against me, but not what they make me say or sing for myself. It is enough to answer for what I have written; but it were too much for Job himself to bear what one has not. I suspect that when the Arab Patriarch wished that his 'enemy had written a book,' he did not anticipate his own name on the title-page. I feel quite as much bored with this foolery as it deserves, and more than I should be if I had not a headach.

"Of Glenarvon, Madame de Staël told me (ten days ago, at Copet) marvellous and grievous things; but I have seen nothing of it but the motto, which promises amiably 'for us and for our tragedy.' If such be the posy, what should the ring be? 'a name to all succeeding *,' &c. The generous moment selected for the publication is probably its kindest accompaniment, and — truth to say — the

* The motto is —

"He left a name to all succeeding times,
Link'd with one virtue and a thousand crimes."

time *was* well chosen. I have not even a guess at the contents, except from the very vague accounts I have heard.

"I ought to be ashamed of the egotism of this letter. It is not my fault altogether, and I shall be but too happy to drop the subject when others will allow me.

"I am in tolerable plight, and in my last letter told you what I had done in the way of all rhyme. I trust that you prosper, and that your authors are in good condition. I should suppose your stud has received some increase by what I hear. Bertram must be a good horse; does he run next meeting? I hope you will beat the Row. Yours alway," &c.

LETTER 244. TO MR. ROGERS.

"Diodati, near Geneva, July 29. 1816.

"Do you recollect a book, Mathieson's Letters, which you lent me, which I have still, and yet hope to return to your library? Well, I have encountered at Copet and elsewhere Gray's correspondent, that same Bonstetten, to whom I lent the translation of his correspondent's epistles, for a few days; but all he could remember of Gray amounts to little, except that he was the most 'melancholy and gentleman-like' of all possible poets. Bonstetten himself is a fine and very lively old man, and much esteemed by his compatriots; he is also a *littérateur* of good repute, and all his friends have a mania of addressing to him volumes of letters — Mathieson, Muller the historian, &c. &c. He is a good deal at Copet,

where I have met him a few times. All there are well, except Rocca, who, I am sorry to say, looks in a very bad state of health. Schlegel is in high force, and Madame as brilliant as ever.

"I came here by the Netherlands and the Rhine route, and Basle, Berne, Morat, and Lausanne. I have circumnavigated the Lake, and go to Chamouni with the first fair weather; but really we have had lately such stupid mists, fogs, and perpetual density, that one would think Castlereagh had the Foreign Affairs of the kingdom of Heaven also on his hands. I need say nothing to you of these parts, you having traversed them already. I do not think of Italy before September. I have read Glenarvon, and have also seen Ben. Constant's Adolphe, and his preface, denying the real people. It is a work which leaves an unpleasant impression, but very consistent with the consequences of not being in love, which is, perhaps, as disagreeable as any thing, except being so. I doubt, however, whether all such *liens* (as he calls them) terminate so wretchedly as his hero and heroine's.

"There is a third Canto (a longer than either of the former) of Childe Harold finished, and some smaller things,— among them a story on the Château de Chillon; I only wait a good opportunity to transmit them to the grand Murray, who, I hope, flourishes. Where is Moore? Why is he not out? My love to him, and my perfect consideration and remembrances to all, particularly to Lord and Lady Holland, and to your Duchess of Somerset.

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. I send you a *fac-simile*, a note of Bonstetten's, thinking you might like to see the hand of Gray's correspondent."

LETTER 245. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Diodati, Sept. 29. 1816.

"I am very much flattered by Mr. Gifford's good opinion of the MSS., and shall be still more so if it answers your expectations and justifies his kindness. I liked it myself, but that must go for nothing. The feelings with which most of it was written need not be envied me. With regard to the price, *I* fixed *none*, but left it to Mr. Kinnaird, Mr. Shelley, and yourself, to arrange. Of course, they would do their best; and as to yourself, I knew you would make no difficulties. But I agree with Mr. Kinnaird perfectly, that the concluding *five hundred* should be only *conditional;* and for my own sake, I wish it to be added, only in case of your selling a certain number, *that number* to be fixed by *yourself.* I hope this is fair. In every thing of this kind there must be risk; and till that be past, in one way or the other, I would not willingly add to it, particularly in times like the present. And pray always recollect that nothing could mortify me more — no failure on my own part — than having made you lose by any purchase from me.

"The Monody * was written by request of Mr. Kinnaird for the theatre. I did as well as I could;

* A Monody on the death of Sheridan, which was spoken at Drury Lane theatre.

but where I have not my choice I pretend to answer for nothing. Mr. Hobhouse and myself are just returned from a journey of lakes and mountains. We have been to the Grindelwald, and the Jungfrau, and stood on the summit of the Wengen Alp; and seen torrents of nine hundred feet in fall, and glaciers of all dimensions: we have heard shepherds' pipes, and avalanches, and looked on the clouds foaming up from the valleys below us, like the spray of the ocean of hell. Chamouni, and that which it inherits, we saw a month ago: but though Mont Blanc is higher, it is not equal in wildness to the Jungfrau, the Eighers, the Shreckhorn, and the Rose Glaciers.

"We set off for Italy next week. The road is within this month infested with bandits, but we must take our chance and such precautions as are requisite.

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. My best remembrances to Mr. Gifford. Pray say all that can be said from me to him.

"I am sorry that Mr. Maturin did not like Phillips's picture. I thought it was reckoned a good one. If he had made the speech on the original, perhaps he would have been more readily forgiven by the proprietor and the painter of the portrait * * *."

LETTER 246. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Diodati, Sept. 30. 1816.

"I answered your obliging letters yesterday: today the Monody arrived with its *title*-page, which is,

I presume, a separate publication. ‘ The request of a friend : ’ —

“ ‘ Obliged by hunger and request of friends.’

I will request you to expunge that same, unless you please to add, ‘ by a person of quality,’ or ‘ of wit and honour about town.’ Merely say, ‘ written to be spoken at Drury Lane.’ To-morrow I dine at Copet. Saturday I strike tents for Italy. This evening, on the lake in my boat with Mr. Hobhouse, the pole which sustains the mainsail slipped in tacking, and struck me so violently on one of my legs (the *worst*, luckily) as to make me do a foolish thing, viz. to *faint* — a downright swoon ; the thing must have jarred some nerve or other, for the bone is not injured, and hardly painful (it is six hours since), and cost Mr. Hobhouse some apprehension and much sprinkling of water to recover me. The sensation was a very odd one : I never had but two such before, once from a cut on the head from a stone, several years ago, and once (long ago also) in falling into a great wreath of snow ; — a sort of grey giddiness first, then nothingness, and a total loss of memory on beginning to recover. The last part is not disagreeable, if one did not find it again.

“ You want the original MSS. Mr. Davies has the first fair copy in my own hand, and I have the rough composition here, and will send or save it for you, since you wish it.

“ With regard to your new literary project, if any thing falls in the way which will, to the best of my judgment, suit you, I will send you what I can. At

present I must lay by a little, having pretty well exhausted myself in what I have sent you. Italy or Dalmatia and another summer may, or may not, set me off again. I have no plans, and am nearly as indifferent what may come as where I go. I shall take Felicia Heman's Restoration, &c. with me; it is a good poem — very.

" Pray repeat my best thanks and remembrances to Mr. Gifford for all his trouble and good nature towards me.

" Do not fancy me laid up, from the beginning of this scrawl. I tell you the accident for want of better to say; but it is over, and I am only wondering what the deuce was the matter with me.

" I have lately been over all the Bernese Alps and their lakes. I think many of the scenes (some of which were not those usually frequented by the English) finer than Chamouni, which I visited some time before. I have been to Clarens again, and crossed the mountains behind it: of this tour I kept a short journal for my sister, which I sent yesterday in three letters. It is not all for perusal; but if you like to hear about the romantic part, she will, I dare say, show you what touches upon the rocks, &c.

" Christabel — I won't have any one sneer at Christabel: it is a fine wild poem.

" Madame de Staël wishes to see the Antiquary, and I am going to take it to her to-morrow. She has made Copet as agreeable as society and talent can make any place on earth. Yours ever,

" N."

From the Journal mentioned in the foregoing letter, I am enabled to give the following extracts: —

EXTRACTS FROM A JOURNAL.

" September 18. 1816.

" Yesterday, September 17th, I set out with Mr. Hobhouse on an excursion of some days to the mountains.

" September 17.

" Rose at five; left Diodati about seven, in one of the country carriages (a char-à-banc), our servants on horseback. Weather very fine; the lake calm and clear; Mont Blanc and the Aiguille of Argentières both very distinct; the borders of the lake beautiful. Reached Lausanne before sunset; stopped and slept at ——. Went to bed at nine: slept till five o'clock.

" September 18.

" Called by my courier; got up. Hobhouse walked on before. A mile from Lausanne, the road overflowed by the lake; got on horseback and rode till within a mile of Vevay. The colt young, but went very well. Overtook Hobhouse, and resumed the carriage, which is an open one. Stopped at Vevay two hours (the second time I had visited it); walked to the church; view from the churchyard superb; within it General Ludlow (the regicide's) monument — black marble — long inscription — Latin, but simple; he was an exile two-and-thirty-years — one of King Charles's judges. Near him Broughton (who read King Charles's sentence to

Charles Stuart) is buried, with a queer and rather canting, but still a republican, inscription. Ludlow's house shown; it retains still its inscription—'Omne solum forti patria.' Walked down to the Lake side; servants, carriage, saddle-horses—all set off and left us *plantés là*, by some mistake, and we walked on after them towards Clarens: Hobhouse ran on before, and overtook them at last. Arrived the second time (first time was by water) at Clarens. Went to Chillon through scenery worthy of I know not whom; went over the Castle of Chillon again. On our return met an English party in a carriage; a lady in it fast asleep—fast asleep in the most anti-narcotic spot in the world—excellent! I remember, at Chamouni, in the very eyes of Mont Blanc, hearing another woman, English also, exclaim to her party, 'Did you ever see any thing more *rural?*'—as if it was Highgate, or Hampstead, or Brompton, or Hayes,—'Rural!' quotha.—Rocks, pines, torrents, glaciers, clouds, and summits of eternal snow far above them—and 'rural!'

"After a slight and short dinner we visited the Chateau de Clarens; an English woman has rented it recently (it was not let when I saw it first); the roses are gone with their summer; the family out, but the servants desired us to walk over the interior of the mansion. Saw on the table of the saloon Blair's Sermons and somebody else's (I forget who's) sermons, and a set of noisy children. Saw all worth seeing, and then descended to the 'Bosquet de Julie,' &c. &c.; our guide full of Rousseau, whom he is eternally confounding with St. Preux, and

mixing the man and the book. Went again as far as Chillon to revisit the little torrent from the hill behind it. Sunset reflected in the lake. Have to get up at five to-morrow to cross the mountains on horseback; carriage to be sent round; lodged at my old cottage — hospitable and comfortable; tired with a longish ride on the colt, and the subsequent jolting of the char-à-banc, and my scramble in the hot sun.

" Mem. The corporal who showed the wonders of Chillon was as drunk as Blucher, and (to my mind) as great a man; he was deaf also, and thinking every one else so, roared out the legends of the castle so fearfully that H. got out of humour. However, we saw things from the gallows to the dungeons (the *potence* and the *cachots*), and returned to Clarens with more freedom than belonged to the fifteenth century.

" September 19.

" Rose at five. Crossed the mountains to Montbovon on horseback, and on mules, and, by dint of scrambling, on foot also; the whole route beautiful as a dream, and now to me almost as indistinct. I am so tired; — for though healthy, I have not the strength I possessed but a few years ago. At Montbovon we breakfasted; afterwards, on a steep ascent dismounted; tumbled down; cut a finger open; the baggage also got loose and fell down a ravine, till stopped by a large tree; recovered baggage; horse tired and drooping; mounted mule. At the approach of the summit of Dent Jument * dismounted

* Dent de Jaman.

again with Hobhouse and all the party. Arrived at a lake in the very bosom of the mountains; left our quadrupeds with a shepherd, and ascended farther; came to some snow in patches, upon which my forehead's perspiration fell like rain, making the same dints as in a sieve; the chill of the wind and the snow turned me giddy, but I scrambled on and upwards. Hobhouse went to the highest pinnacle; I did not, but paused within a few yards (at an opening of the cliff). In coming down, the guide tumbled three times; I fell a laughing, and tumbled too — the descent luckily soft, though steep and slippery: Hobhouse also fell, but nobody hurt. The whole of the mountains superb. A shepherd on a very steep and high cliff playing upon his *pipe;* very different from *Arcadia*, where I saw the pastors with a long musket instead of a crook, and pistols in their girdles. Our Swiss shepherd's pipe was sweet, and his tune agreeable. I saw a cow strayed; am told that they often break their necks on and over the crags. Descended to Montbovon; pretty scraggy village, with a wild river and a wooden bridge. Hobhouse went to fish — caught one. Our carriage not come; our horses, mules, &c. knocked up; ourselves fatigued; but so much the better — I shall sleep.

"The view from the highest points of to-day's journey comprised on one side the greatest part of Lake Leman; on the other, the valleys and mountain of the Canton of Fribourg, and an immense plain, with the lakes of Neuchâtel and Morat, and all which the borders of the Lake of Geneva inherit;

we had both sides of the Jura before us in one point of view, with Alps in plenty. In passing a ravine, the guide recommended strenuously a quickening of pace, as the stones fall with great rapidity and occasional damage; the advice is excellent, but, like most good advice, impracticable, the road being so rough that neither mules, nor mankind, nor horses, can make any violent progress. Passed without fractures or menace thereof.

"The music of the cow's bells (for their wealth, like the patriarchs', is cattle) in the pastures, which reach to a height far above any mountains in Britain, and the shepherds shouting to us from crag to crag, and playing on their reeds where the steeps appeared almost inaccessible, with the surrounding scenery, realised all that I have ever heard or imagined of a pastoral existence: — much more so than Greece or Asia Minor, for there we are a little too much of the sabre and musket order, and if there is a crook in one hand, you are sure to see a gun in the other: — but this was pure and unmixed — solitary, savage, and patriarchal. As we went, they played the 'Rans des Vaches' and other airs, by way of farewell. I have lately repeopled my mind with nature.

"September 20.

Up at six; off at eight. The whole of this day's journey at an average of between from 2700 to 3000 feet above the level of the sea. This valley, the longest, narrowest, and considered the finest of the Alps, little traversed by travellers. Saw the bridge of La Roche. The bed of the river very low and

deep, between immense rocks, and rapid as anger; — a man and mule said to have tumbled over without damage. The people looked free, and happy, and *rich* (which last implies neither of the former); the cows superb; a bull nearly leapt into the char-à-banc — 'agreeable companion in a post-chaise;' goats and sheep very thriving. A mountain with enormous glaciers to the right — the Klitzgerberg; further on, the Hockthorn — nice names — so soft! — *Stockhorn*, I believe, very lofty and scraggy, patched with snow only; no glaciers on it, but some good epaulettes of clouds.

"Passed the boundaries, out of Vaud and into Berne canton; French exchanged for bad German; the district famous for cheese, liberty, property, and no taxes. Hobhouse went to fish — caught none. Strolled to the river; saw boy and kid; kid followed him like a dog; kid could not get over a fence, and bleated piteously; tried myself to help kid, but nearly overset both self and kid into the river. Arrived here about six in the evening. Nine o'clock — going to bed; not tired to day, but hope to sleep, nevertheless.

"September 21.

"Off early. The valley of Simmenthal as before. Entrance to the plain of Thoun very narrow; high rocks, wooded to the top; river; new mountains, with fine glaciers. Lake of Thoun; extensive plain with a girdle of Alps. Walked down to the Chateau de Schadau; view along the lake; crossed the river in a boat rowed by women. Thoun a very

pretty town. The whole day's journey Alpine and proud.

" September 22.

" Left Thoun in a boat, which carried us the length of the lake in three hours. The lake small; but the banks fine. Rocks down to the water's edge. Landed at Newhause; passed Interlachen; entered upon a range of scenes beyond all description or previous conception. Passed a rock; inscription — two brothers — one murdered the other; just the place for it. After a variety of windings came to an enormous rock. Arrived at the foot of the mountain (the Jungfrau, that is, the Maiden); glaciers; torrents; one of these torrents *nine hundred feet* in height of visible descent. Lodged at the curate's. Set out to see the valley; heard an avalanche fall, like thunder; glaciers enormous; storm came on, thunder, lightning, hail; all in perfection, and beautiful. I was on horseback; guide wanted to carry my cane; I was going to give it him, when I recollected that it was a sword-stick, and I thought the lightning might be attracted towards him; kept it myself; a good deal encumbered with it, as it was too heavy for a whip, and the horse was stupid, and stood with every other peal. Got in, not very wet, the cloak being stanch. Hobhouse wet through; Hobhouse took refuge in cottage; sent man, umbrella, and cloak (from the curate's when I arrived) after him. Swiss curate's house very good indeed — much better than most English vicarages. It is immediately opposite the torrent I spoke of. The torrent is in shape curving over the rock, like the

tail of a white horse streaming in the wind, such as it might be conceived would be that of the 'pale horse' on which Death is mounted in the Apocalypse.* It is neither mist nor water, but a something between both; its immense height (nine hundred feet) gives it a wave or curve, a spreading here or condensation there, wonderful and indescribable. I think, upon the whole, that this day has been better than any of this present excursion.

"September 23.

"Before ascending the mountain, went to the torrent (seven in the morning) again; the sun upon it, forming a *rainbow* of the lower part of all colours, but principally purple and gold; the bow moving as you move; I never saw any thing like this; it is only in the sunshine. Ascended the Wengen mountain; at noon reached a valley on the summit; left the horses, took off my coat, and went to the summit, seven thousand feet (English feet) above the level of the *sea*, and about five thousand above the valley

* It is interesting to observe the use to which he afterwards converted these hasty memorandums in his sublime drama of Manfred.

"It is not noon — the sunbow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death
As told in the Apocalypse."

we left in the morning. On one side, our view comprised the Jungfrau, with all her glaciers; then the Dent d'Argent, shining like truth; then the Little Giant (the Kleine Eigher); and the Great Giant (the Grosse Eigher), and last, not least, the Wetterhorn. The height of Jungfrau is 13,000 feet above the sea, 11,000 above the valley; she is the highest of this range. Heard the avalanches falling every five minutes nearly. From whence we stood, on the Wengen Alp, we had all these in view on one side; on the other, the clouds rose from the opposite valley, curling up perpendicular precipices like the foam of the ocean of hell, during a spring tide—it was white, and sulphury, and immeasurably deep in appearance.* The side we ascended was (of course) not of so precipitous a nature; but on arriving at the summit, we looked down upon the other side upon a boiling sea of cloud, dashing against the crags on which we stood (these crags on one side quite perpendicular). Stayed a quarter of an hour; begun to descend; quite clear from cloud on that side of the mountain. In passing the masses of snow, I made a snowball and pelted Hobhouse with it.

"Got down to our horses again; ate something;

* " Ye *avalanches*, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict. * * *
The mists boil up around the glaciers; *clouds*
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep hell! "

MANFRED.

remounted; heard the avalanches still; came to a morass; Hobhouse dismounted to get over well; I tried to pass my horse over; the horse sunk up to the chin, and of course he and I were in the mud together; bemired, but not hurt; laughed, and rode on. Arrived at the Grindelwald; dined; mounted again, and rode to the higher glacier—like *a frozen hurricane.** Starlight, beautiful, but a devil of a path! Never mind, got safe in; a little lightning; but the whole of the day as fine in point of weather as the day on which Paradise was made. Passed *whole woods of withered pines, all withered;* trunks stripped and barkless, branches lifeless; done by a single winter†,—their appearance reminded me of me and my family.

"September 24.

"Set off at seven; up at five. Passed the black glacier, the mountain Wetterhorn on the right; crossed the Scheideck mountain; came to the *Rose* glacier, said to be the largest and finest in Switzerland. *I* think the Bossons glacier at Chamouni as fine; Hobhouse does not. Came to the Reichenbach waterfall, two hundred feet high; halted to rest the horses. Arrived in the valley of Overland; rain came on; drenched a little; only four hours' rain,

* "O'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling *tempest*'s foam,
Frozen in a moment." MANFRED.

† "Like these *blasted pines*,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless." IBID.

however, in eight days. Came to the lake of Brientz, then to the town of Brientz; changed. In the evening, four Swiss peasant girls of Oberhasli came and sang the airs of their country; two of the voices beautiful—the tunes also; so wild and original, and at the same time of great sweetness. The singing is over; but below stairs I hear the notes of a fiddle, which bode no good to my night's rest; I shall go down and see the dancing.

" September 25.

" The whole town of Brientz were apparently gathered together in the rooms below; pretty music and excellent waltzing; none but peasants; the dancing much better than in England; the English can't waltz, never could, never will. One man with his pipe in his mouth, but danced as well as the others; some other dances in pairs and in fours, and very good. I went to bed, but the revelry continued below late and early. Brientz but a village. Rose early. Embarked on the lake of Brientz; rowed by the women in a long boat; presently we put to shore, and another woman jumped in. It seems it is the custom here for the boats to be *manned* by *women:* for of five men and three women in our bark, all the women took an oar, and but one man.

" Got to Interlachen in three hours; pretty lake; not so large as that of Thoun. Dined at Interlachen. Girl gave me some flowers, and made me a speech in German, of which I know nothing; I do not know whether the speech was pretty, but as the woman was, I hope so. Re-embarked on the lake of Thoun;

fell asleep part of the way; sent our horses round; found people on the shore, blowing up a rock with gunpowder; they blew it up near our boat, only telling us a minute before; — mere stupidity, but they might have broken our noddles. Got to Thoun in the evening; the weather has been tolerable the whole day. But as the wild part of our tour is finished, it don't matter to us; in all the desirable part, we have been most lucky in warmth and clearness of atmosphere.

" September 26.

" Being out of the mountains, my journal must be as flat as my journey. From Thoun to Berne, good road, hedges, villages, industry, property, and all sorts of tokens of insipid civilisation. From Berne to Fribourg; different canton; Catholics; passed a field of battle; Swiss beat the French in one of the late wars against the French republic. Bought a dog. The greater part of this tour has been on horseback, on foot, and on mule.

" September 28.

" Saw the tree planted in honour of the battle of Morat; three hundred and forty years old; a good deal decayed. Left Fribourg, but first saw the cathedral; high tower. Overtook the baggage of the nuns of La Trappe, who are removing to Normandy; afterwards a coach, with a quantity of nuns in it. Proceeded along the banks of the lake of Neuchâtel; very pleasing and soft, but not so mountainous — at least, the Jura, not appearing so, after the Bernese Alps. Reached Yverdun in the dusk; a long line of large trees on the border of the lake; fine and

sombre; the auberge nearly full—a German princess and suite; got rooms.

" September 29.

" Passed through a fine and flourishing country, but not mountainous. In the evening reached Aubonne (the entrance and bridge something like that of Durham), which commands by far the fairest view of the Lake of Geneva; twilight; the moon on the lake; a grove on the height, and of very noble trees. Here Tavernier (the eastern traveller) bought (or built) the château, because the site resembled and equalled that of *Erivan*, a frontier city of Persia; here he finished his voyages, and I this little excursion, — for I am within a few hours of Diodati, and have little more to see, and no more to say."

With the following melancholy passage this Journal concludes: —

" In the weather for this tour (of 13 days), I have been very fortunate — fortunate in a companion (Mr. H.) — fortunate in our prospects, and exempt from even the little petty accidents and delays which often render journeys in a less wild country disappointing. I was disposed to be pleased. I am a lover of nature and an admirer of beauty. I can bear fatigue and welcome privation, and have seen some of the noblest views in the world. But in all this — the recollection of bitterness, and more especially of recent and more home desolation, which must accompany me through life, have preyed upon me here; and neither the music of the shepherd,

the crashing of the avalanche, nor the torrent, the mountain, the glacier, the forest, nor the cloud, have for one moment lightened the weight upon my heart, nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty, and the power, and the glory, around, above, and beneath me."

Among the inmates at Sécheron, on his arrival at Geneva, Lord Byron had found Mr. and Mrs. Shelley, and a female relative of the latter, who had about a fortnight before taken up their residence at this hotel. It was the first time that Lord Byron and Mr. Shelley ever met; though, long before, when the latter was quite a youth, — being the younger of the two by four or five years, — he had sent to the noble poet a copy of his Queen Mab, accompanied by a letter, in which, after detailing at full length all the accusations he had heard brought against his character, he added, that, should these charges not have been true, it would make him happy to be honoured with his acquaintance. The book alone, it appears, reached its destination, — the letter having miscarried, — and Lord Byron was known to have expressed warm admiration of the opening lines of the poem.

There was, therefore, on their present meeting at Geneva, no want of disposition towards acquaintance on either side, and an intimacy almost immediately sprung up between them. Among the tastes common to both, that for boating was not the least strong; and in this beautiful region they had more than ordinary temptations to indulge in it. Every evening, during their residence under the same roof at Sé-

cheron, they embarked, accompanied by the ladies and Polidori, on the Lake; and to the feelings and fancies inspired by these excursions, which were not unfrequently prolonged into the hours of moonlight, we are indebted for some of those enchanting stanzas *, in which the poet has given way to his passionate love of Nature so fervidly.

"There breathes a living fragrance from the shore
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drips the light drop of the suspended oar.
* * * * * * *
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, — for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away."

A person who was of these parties has thus described to me one of their evenings:—"When the *bise* or north-east wind blows, the waters of the Lake are driven towards the town, and with the stream of the Rhone, which sets strongly in the same direction, combine to make a very rapid current towards the harbour. Carelessly, one evening, we had yielded to its course, till we found ourselves almost driven on the piles; and it required all our rowers' strength to master the tide. The waves were high and inspiriting — we were all animated by our contest with the elements. 'I will sing you an Albanian song,' cried Lord Byron; 'now, be sentimental and

* Childe Harold, Canto iii.

give me all your attention.' It was a strange, wild howl that he gave forth; but such as, he declared, was an exact imitation of the savage Albanian mode, — laughing, the while, at our disappointment, who had expected a wild Eastern melody."

Sometimes the party landed, for a walk upon the shore, and, on such occasions, Lord Byron would loiter behind the rest, lazily trailing his sword-stick along, and moulding, as he went, his thronging thoughts into shape. Often too, when in the boat, he would lean abstractedly over the side, and surrender himself up, in silence, to the same absorbing task.

The conversation of Mr. Shelley, from the extent of his poetic reading, and the strange, mystic speculations into which his system of philosophy led him, was of a nature strongly to arrest and interest the attention of Lord Byron, and to turn him away from worldly associations and topics into more abstract and untrodden ways of thought. As far as contrast, indeed, is an enlivening ingredient of such intercourse, it would be difficult to find two persons more formed to whet each other's faculties by discussion, as on few points of common interest between them did their opinions agree; and that this difference had its root deep in the conformation of their respective minds needs but a glance through the rich, glittering labyrinth of Mr. Shelley's pages to assure us.

In Lord Byron, the real was never forgotten in the fanciful. However Imagination had placed her whole realm at his disposal, he was no less a man of this world than a ruler of hers; and, accordingly,

through the airiest and most subtile creations of his brain still the life-blood of truth and reality circulates. With Shelley it was far otherwise;—his fancy (and he had sufficient for a whole generation of poets) was the medium through which he saw all things, his facts as well as his theories; and not only the greater part of his poetry, but the political and philosophical speculations in which he indulged, were all distilled through the same over-refining and unrealising alembic. Having started as a teacher and reformer of the world, at an age when he could know nothing of the world but from fancy, the persecution he met with on the threshold of this boyish enterprise but confirmed him in his first paradoxical views of human ills and their remedies; and, instead of waiting to take lessons of authority and experience, he, with a courage, admirable had it been but wisely directed, made war upon both. From this sort of self-willed start in the world, an impulse was at once given to his opinions and powers directly contrary, it would seem, to their natural bias, and from which his life was too short to allow him time to recover. With a mind, by nature, fervidly pious, he yet refused to acknowledge a Supreme Providence, and substituted some airy abstraction of "Universal Love" in its place. An aristocrat by birth and, as I understand, also in appearance and manners, he was yet a leveller in politics, and to such an Utopian extent as to be, seriously, the advocate of a community of property. With a delicacy and even romance of sentiment, which lends such grace to some of his lesser poems,

he could notwithstanding contemplate a change in the relations of the sexes, which would have led to results fully as gross as his arguments for it were fastidious and refined; and though benevolent and generous to an extent that seemed to exclude all idea of selfishness, he yet scrupled not, in the pride of system, to disturb wantonly the faith of his fellow-men, and, without substituting any equivalent good in its place, to rob the wretched of a hope, which, even if false, would be worth all this world's best truths.

Upon no point were the opposite tendencies of the two friends,—to long-established opinions and matter of fact on one side, and to all that was most innovating and visionary on the other,—more observable than in their notions on philosophical subjects; Lord Byron being, with the great bulk of mankind, a believer in the existence of Matter and Evil, while Shelley so far refined upon the theory of Berkeley as not only to resolve the whole of Creation into spirit, but to add also to this immaterial system some pervading principle, some abstract non-entity of Love and Beauty, of which — as a substitute, at least, for Deity — the philosophic bishop had never dreamed. On such subjects, and on poetry, their conversation generally turned; and, as might be expected, from Lord Byron's facility in receiving new impressions, the opinions of his companion were not altogether without some influence on his mind. Here and there, among those fine bursts of passion and description that abound in the third Canto of Childe Harold, may be discovered traces of

that mysticism of meaning,—that sublimity, losing itself in its own vagueness,—which so much characterised the writings of his extraordinary friend; and in one of the notes we find Shelley's favourite Pantheism of Love thus glanced at:—"But this is not all: the feeling with which all around Clarens and the opposite rocks of Meillerie is invested, is of a still higher and more comprehensive order than the mere sympathy with individual passion; it is a sense of the existence of love in its most extended and sublime capacity, and of our own participation of its good and of its glory: it is the great principle of the universe, which is there more condensed, but not less manifested; and of which, though knowing ourselves a part, we lose our individuality, and mingle in the beauty of the whole."

Another proof of the ductility with which he fell into his new friend's tastes and predilections, appears in the tinge, if not something deeper, of the manner and cast of thinking of Mr. Wordsworth, which is traceable through so many of his most beautiful stanzas. Being naturally, from his love of the abstract and imaginative, an admirer of the great poet of the Lakes, Mr. Shelley omitted no opportunity of bringing the beauties of his favourite writer under the notice of Lord Byron; and it is not surprising that, once persuaded into a fair perusal, the mind of the noble poet should—in spite of some personal and political prejudices which unluckily survived this short access of admiration—not only feel the influence but, in some degree, even reflect the hues of one of the very few real and original poets that this

age (fertile as it is in rhymers *quales ego et Cluvienus*) has had the glory of producing.

When Polidori was of their party, (which, till he found attractions elsewhere, was generally the case,) their more elevated subjects of conversation were almost always put to flight by the strange sallies of this eccentric young man, whose vanity made him a constant butt for Lord Byron's sarcasm and merriment. The son of a highly respectable Italian gentleman, who was in early life, I understand, the secretary of Alfieri, Polidori seems to have possessed both talents and dispositions which, had he lived, might have rendered him a useful member of his profession and of society. At the time, however, of which we are speaking, his ambition of distinction far outwent both his powers and opportunities of attaining it. His mind, accordingly, between ardour and weakness, was kept in a constant hectic of vanity, and he seems to have alternately provoked and amused his noble employer, leaving him seldom any escape from anger but in laughter. Among other pretensions, he had set his heart upon shining as an author, and one evening at Mr. Shelley's, producing a tragedy of his own writing, insisted that they should undergo the operation of hearing it. To lighten the infliction, Lord Byron took upon himself the task of reader; and the whole scene, from the description I have heard of it, must have been not a little trying to gravity. In spite of the jealous watch kept upon every countenance by the author, it was impossible to withstand the smile lurking in the eye of the reader, whose only resource against the outbreak of

his own laughter lay in lauding, from time to time, most vehemently, the sublimity of the verses; — particularly some that began " 'Tis thus the goîter'd idiot of the Alps,' — and then adding, at the close of every such eulogy, " I assure you when I was in the Drury Lane Committee, much worse things were offered to us."

After passing a fortnight under the same roof with Lord Byron at Sécheron, Mr. and Mrs. Shelley removed to a small house on the Mont-Blanc side of the Lake, within about ten minutes' walk of the villa which their noble friend had taken, upon the high banks, called Belle Rive, that rose immediately behind them. During the fortnight that Lord Byron outstaid them at Sécheron, though the weather had changed and was become windy and cloudy, he every evening crossed the Lake, with Polidori, to visit them; and "as he returned again (says my informant) over the darkened waters, the wind, from far across, bore us his voice singing your Tyrolese Song of Liberty, which I then first heard, and which is to me inextricably linked with his remembrance."

In the mean time, Polidori had become jealous of the growing intimacy of his noble patron with Shelley; and the plan which he now understood them to have formed of making a tour of the Lake without him completed his mortification. In the soreness of his feelings on this subject he indulged in some intemperate remonstrances, which Lord Byron indignantly resented; and the usual bounds of courtesy being passed on both sides, the dismissal of Polidori appeared, even to himself, inevitable.

With this prospect, which he considered nothing less than ruin, before his eyes, the poor young man was, it seems, on the point of committing that fatal act which, two or three years afterwards, he actually did perpetrate. Retiring to his own room, he had already drawn forth the poison from his medicine chest, and was pausing to consider whether he should write a letter before he took it, when Lord Byron (without, however, the least suspicion of his intention) tapped at the door and entered, with his hand held forth in sign of reconciliation. The sudden revulsion was too much for poor Polidori, who burst into tears; and, in relating all the circumstances of the occurrence afterwards, he declared that nothing could exceed the gentle kindness of Lord Byron in soothing his mind and restoring him to composure.

Soon after this the noble poet removed to Diodati. He had, on his first coming to Geneva, with the good-natured view of introducing Polidori into company, gone to several Genevese parties; but, this task performed, he retired altogether from society till late in the summer, when, as we have seen, he visited Copet. His means were at this time very limited; and though he lived by no means parsimoniously, all unnecessary expenses were avoided in his establishment. The young physician had been, at first, a source of much expense to him, being in the habit of hiring a carriage, at a louis a day (Lord Byron not then keeping horses), to take him to his evening parties; and it was some time before his noble patron had the courage to put this luxury down.

The liberty, indeed, which this young person

allowed himself was, on one occasion, the means of bringing an imputation upon the poet's hospitality and good breeding, which, like every thing else, true or false, tending to cast a shade upon his character, was for some time circulated with the most industrious zeal. Without any authority from the noble owner of the mansion, he took upon himself to invite some Genevese gentlemen (M. Pictet, and, I believe, M. Bonstetten) to dine at Diodati; and the punishment which Lord Byron thought it right to inflict upon him for such freedom was, "as he had invited the guests, to leave him also to entertain them." This step, though merely a consequence of the physician's indiscretion, it was not difficult, of course, to convert into a serious charge of caprice and rudeness against the host himself.

By such repeated instances of thoughtlessness (to use no harsher term), it is not wonderful that Lord Byron should at last be driven into a feeling of distaste towards his medical companion, of whom he one day remarked, that "he was exactly the kind of person to whom, if he fell overboard, one would hold out a straw, to know if the adage be true that drowning men catch at straws."

A few more anecdotes of this young man, while in the service of Lord Byron, may, as throwing light upon the character of the latter, be not inappropriately introduced. While the whole party were, one day, out boating, Polidori, by some accident, in rowing, struck Lord Byron violently on the knee-pan with his oar; and the latter, without speaking, turned his face away to hide the pain. After a moment he

said, "Be so kind, Polidori, another time, to take more care, for you hurt me very much." — "I am glad of it," answered the other; "I am glad to see you can suffer pain." In a calm suppressed tone, Lord Byron replied, "Let me advise you, Polidori, when you, another time, hurt any one, not to express your satisfaction. People don't like to be told that those who give them pain are glad of it; and they cannot always command their anger. It was with some difficulty that I refrained from throwing you into the water; and, but for Mrs. Shelley's presence, I should probably have done some such rash thing." This was said without ill temper, and the cloud soon passed away.

Another time, when the lady just mentioned was, after a shower of rain, walking up the hill to Diodati, Lord Byron, who saw her from his balcony where he was standing with Polidori, said to the latter, "Now, you who wish to be gallant ought to jump down this small height, and offer your arm." Polidori chose the easiest part of the declivity, and leaped; — but the ground being wet, his foot slipped, and he sprained his ankle.* Lord Byron instantly helped to carry him in and procure cold water for the foot; and, after he was laid on the sofa, perceiving that he was uneasy, went up stairs himself (an exertion which his lameness made painful and disagreeable) to fetch a pillow for him. "Well, I did not believe you had so much feeling," was Polidori's gracious

* To this lameness of Polidori, one of the preceding letters of Lord Byron alludes.

remark, which, it may be supposed, not a little clouded the noble poet's brow.

A dialogue which Lord Byron himself used to mention as having taken place between them during their journey on the Rhine, is amusingly characteristic of both the persons concerned. "After all," said the physician, "what is there you can do that I cannot?" — "Why, since you force me to say," answered the other, "I think there are three things I can do which you cannot." Polidori defied him to name them. "I can," said Lord Byron, "swim across that river — I can snuff out that candle with a pistol-shot at the distance of twenty paces — and I have written a poem * of which 14,000 copies were sold in one day."

The jealous pique of the Doctor against Shelley was constantly breaking out; and on the occasion of some victory which the latter had gained over him in a sailing-match, he took it into his head that his antagonist had treated him with contempt; and went so far, in consequence, notwithstanding Shelley's known sentiments against duelling, as to proffer him a sort of challenge, at which Shelley, as might be expected, only laughed. Lord Byron, however, fearing that the vivacious physician might still further take advantage of this peculiarity of his friend, said to him, "Recollect, that though Shelley has some scruples about duelling, *I* have none; and shall be, at all times, ready to take his place."

At Diodati, his life was passed in the same regular round of habits and occupations into which, when

* The Corsair.

left to himself, he always naturally fell; a late breakfast, then a visit to the Shelleys' cottage and an excursion on the Lake; — at five, dinner * (when he usually preferred being alone), and then, if the weather permitted, an excursion again. He and Shelley had joined in purchasing a boat, for which they gave twenty-five *louis*, — a small sailing vessel, fitted to stand the usual squalls of the climate, and, at that time, the only keeled boat on the Lake. When the weather did not allow of their excursions after dinner, — an occurrence not unfrequent during this very wet summer, — the inmates of the cottage passed their evenings at Diodati, and, when the rain rendered it inconvenient for them to return home, remained there to sleep. "We often," says one, who was not the least ornamental of the party, "sat up in conversation till the morning light. There was never any lack of subjects, and, grave or gay, we were always interested."

During a week of rain at this time, having amused themselves with reading German ghost-stories, they agreed, at last, to write something in imitation of them. "You and I," said Lord Byron to Mrs. Shelley, "will publish ours together." He then began his tale of the Vampire; and, having the

* His system of diet here was regulated by an abstinence almost incredible. A thin slice of bread, with tea, at breakfast — a light, vegetable dinner, with a bottle or two of Seltzer water, tinged with vin de Grave, and in the evening, a cup of green tea, without milk or sugar, formed the whole of his sustenance. The pangs of hunger he appeased by privately chewing tobacco and smoking cigars.

whole arranged in his head, repeated to them a sketch of the story * one evening, — but, from the narrative being in prose, made but little progress in filling up his outline. The most memorable result, indeed, of their story-telling compact, was Mrs. Shelley's wild and powerful romance of Frankenstein, — one of those original conceptions that take hold of the public mind at once, and for ever.

Towards the latter end of June, as we have seen in one of the preceding letters, Lord Byron, accompanied by his friend Shelley, made a tour in his boat round the Lake, and visited, " with the Heloise before him," all those scenes around Meillerie and Clarens, which have become consecrated for ever by ideal passion, and by that power which Genius alone possesses, of giving such life to its dreams as to make them seem realities. In the squall off Meillerie, which he mentions, their danger was considerable. † In the expectation, every moment, of

* From his remembrance of this sketch, Polidori afterwards vamped up his strange novel of the Vampire, which, under the supposition of its being Lord Byron's, was received with such enthusiasm in France. It would, indeed, not a little deduct from our value of foreign fame, if what some French writers have asserted be true, that the appearance of this extravagant novel among our neighbours first attracted their attention to the genius of Byron.

† " The wind (says Lord Byron's fellow-voyager) gradually increased in violence until it blew tremendously; and, as it came from the remotest extremity of the Lake, produced waves of a frightful height, and covered the whole surface with a chaos of foam. One of our boatmen, who was a dreadfully stupid fellow, persisted in holding the sail at a time when the

being obliged to swim for his life, Lord Byron had already thrown off his coat, and, as Shelley was no swimmer, insisted upon endeavouring, by some means, to save him. This offer, however, Shelley positively refused; and seating himself quietly upon a locker, and grasping the rings at each end firmly in his hands, declared his determination to go down in that position, without a struggle.*

Subjoined to that interesting little work, the "Six Weeks' Tour," there is a letter by Shelley himself, giving an account of this excursion round the Lake, and written with all the enthusiasm such scenes should inspire. In describing a beautiful child they saw at the village of Nerni, he says, "My companion gave him a piece of money, which he took without speaking, with a sweet smile of easy thankfulness, and then with an unembarrassed air

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boat was on the point of being driven under water by the hurricane. On discovering this error, he let it entirely go, and the boat for a moment refused to obey the helm; in addition, the rudder was so broken as to render the management of it very difficult; one wave fell in, and then another."

* "I felt, in this near prospect of death (says Mr. Shelley), a mixture of sensations, among which terror entered, though but subordinately. My feelings would have been less painful had I been alone; but I knew that my companion would have attempted to save me, and I was overcome with humiliation, when I thought that his life might have been risked to preserve mine. When we arrived at St. Gingoux, the inhabitants, who stood on the shore, unaccustomed to see a vessel as frail as ours, and fearing to venture at all on such a sea, exchanged looks of wonder and congratulation with our boatmen, who, as well as ourselves, were well pleased to set foot on shore."

turned to his play." There were, indeed, few things Lord Byron more delighted in than to watch beautiful children at play ; — " many a lovely Swiss child (says a person who saw him daily at this time) received crowns from him as the reward of their grace and sweetness."

Speaking of their lodgings at Nerni, which were gloomy and dirty, Mr. Shelley says, " On returning to our inn, we found that the servant had arranged our rooms, and deprived them of the greater portion of their former disconsolate appearance. They reminded my companion of Greece : — it was five years, he said, since he had slept in such beds."

Luckily for Shelley's full enjoyment of these scenes, he had never before happened to read the Heloise ; and though his companion had long been familiar with that romance, the sight of the region itself, the " birth-place of deep Love," every spot of which seemed instinct with the passion of the story, gave to the whole a fresh and actual existence in his mind. Both were under the spell of the Genius of the place, — both full of emotion ; and as they walked silently through the vineyards that were once the " bosquet de Julie," Lord Byron suddenly exclaimed, " Thank God, Polidori is not here."

That the glowing stanzas suggested to him by this scene were written upon the spot itself appears almost certain, from the letter addressed to Mr. Murray on his way back to Diodati, in which he announces the third Canto as complete, and consisting of 117 stanzas. At Ouchy, near Lausanne, — the place from which that letter is dated — he

and his friend were detained two days, in a small inn, by the weather: and it was there, in that short interval, that he wrote his "Prisoner of Chillon," adding one more deathless association to the already immortalised localities of the Lake.

On his return from this excursion to Diodati, an occasion was afforded for the gratification of his jesting propensities by the avowal of the young physician that — he had fallen in love. On the evening of this tender confession they both appeared at Shelley's cottage — Lord Byron, in the highest and most boyish spirits, rubbing his hands as he walked about the room, and in that utter incapacity of retention which was one of his foibles, making jesting allusions to the secret he had just heard. The brow of the Doctor darkened as this pleasantry went on, and, at last, he angrily accused Lord Byron of hardness of heart. "I never," said he, "met with a person so unfeeling." This sally, though the poet had evidently brought it upon himself, annoyed him most deeply. "Call *me* cold-hearted — *me* insensible!" he exclaimed, with manifest emotion — "as well might you say that glass is not brittle, which has been cast down a precipice, and lies dashed to pieces at the foot!"

In the month of July he paid a visit to Copet, and was received by the distinguished hostess with a cordiality the more sensibly felt by him as, from his personal unpopularity at this time, he had hardly ventured to count upon it.* In her usual frank

* In the account of this visit to Copet in his Memoranda, he spoke in high terms of the daughter of his hostess, the pre-

style, she took him to task upon his matrimonial conduct — but in a way that won upon his mind, and disposed him to yield to her suggestions. He must endeavour, she told him, to bring about a reconciliation with his wife, and must submit to contend no longer with the opinion of the world. In vain did he quote her own motto to Delphine, "Un homme peut braver, une femme doit se succomber aux opinions du monde;" — her reply was, that all this might be very well to say, but that, in real life, the duty and necessity of yielding belonged also to the man. Her eloquence, in short, so far succeeded, that he was prevailed upon to write a letter to a friend in England, declaring himself still willing to be reconciled to Lady Byron, — a concession not a little startling to those who had so often, lately, heard him declare that, "having done all in his power to persuade Lady Byron to return, and with this view put off as long as he could signing the deed of separation, that step being once taken, they were now divided for ever."

Of the particulars of this brief negotiation that ensued upon Madame de Staël's suggestion, I have

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sent Duchess de Broglie, and, in noticing how much she appeared to be attached to her husband, remarked that "Nothing was more pleasing than to see the developement of the domestic affections in a very young woman." Of Madame de Staël, in that Memoir, he spoke thus: — "Madame de Staël was a good woman at heart and the cleverest at bottom, but spoilt by a wish to be — she knew not what. In her own house she was amiable; in any other person's, you wished her gone, and in her own again."

no very accurate remembrance; but there can be little doubt that its failure, after the violence he had done his own pride in the overture, was what first infused any mixture of resentment or bitterness into the feelings hitherto entertained by him throughout these painful differences. He had, indeed, since his arrival in Geneva, invariably spoken of his lady with kindness and regret, imputing the course she had taken, in leaving him, not to herself but others, and assigning whatever little share of blame he would allow her to bear in the transaction to the simple and, doubtless, true cause — her not at all understanding him. "I have no doubt," he would sometimes say, "that she really did believe me to be mad."

Another resolution connected with his matrimonial affairs, in which he often, at this time, professed his fixed intention to persevere, was that of never allowing himself to touch any part of his wife's fortune. Such a sacrifice, there is no doubt, would have been, in his situation, delicate and manly; but though the natural bent of his disposition led him to *make* the resolution, he wanted, — what few, perhaps, could have attained, — the fortitude to *keep* it.

The effects of the late struggle on his mind, in stirring up all its resources and energies, was visible in the great activity of his genius during the whole of this period, and the rich variety, both in character and colouring, of the works with which it teemed. Besides the third Canto of Childe Harold and the Prisoner of Chillon, he produced also his two poems, "Darkness" and "The Dream," the latter of which cost him many a tear in writing, — being, indeed,

the most mournful, as well as picturesque, "story of a wandering life" that ever came from the pen and heart of man. Those verses, too, entitled "The Incantation," which he introduced afterwards, without any connection with the subject, into Manfred, were also (at least, the less bitter portion of them) the production of this period; and as they were written soon after the last fruitless attempt at reconciliation, it is needless to say who was in his thoughts while he penned some of the opening stanzas.

"Though thy slumber must be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

"Though thou see'st me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye,
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when, in that secret dread,
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal."

Besides the unfinished "Vampire," he began also, at this time, another romance in prose, founded upon the story of the Marriage of Belphegor, and intended

to shadow out his own matrimonial fate. The wife of this satanic personage he described much in the same spirit that pervades his delineation of Donna Inez in the first Canto of Don Juan. While engaged, however, in writing this story, he heard from England that Lady Byron was ill, and, his heart softening at the intelligence, he threw the manuscript into the fire. So constantly were the good and evil principles of his nature conflicting for mastery over him.*

The two following Poems, so different from each other in their character, — the first prying with an awful scepticism into the darkness of another world, and the second breathing all that is most natural and tender in the affections of this, — were also written at this time, and have never before been published.

" EXTRACT FROM AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.

" Could I remount the river of my years
To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,
I would not trace again the stream of hours
Between their outworn banks of wither'd flowers,

* Upon the same occasion, indeed, he wrote some verses in a spirit not quite so generous, of which a few of the opening lines is all I shall give : —

" And thou wert sad — yet I was not with thee!
And thou wert sick — and yet I was not near.
Methought that Joy and Health alone could be
Where I was *not*, and pain and sorrow here.
And is it thus? — it is as I foretold,
And shall be more so : —" &c. &c.

But bid it flow as now — until it glides
Into the number of the nameless tides. * * *
What is this Death? — a quiet of the heart?
The whole of that of which we are a part?
For Life is but a vision — what I see
Of all which lives alone is life to me,
And being so — the absent are the dead,
Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread
A dreary shroud around us, and invest
With sad remembrances our hours of rest.

" The absent are the dead — for they are cold,
And ne'er can be what once we did behold;
And they are changed, and cheerless, — or if yet
The unforgotten do not all forget,
Since thus divided — equal must it be
If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea;
It may be both — but one day end it must
In the dark union of insensate dust.

" The under-earth inhabitants — are they
But mingled millions decomposed to clay?
The ashes of a thousand ages spread
Wherever man has trodden or shall tread?
Or do they in their silent cities dwell
Each in his incommunicative cell?
Or have they their own language? and a sense
Of breathless being? — darken'd and intense
As midnight in her solitude? — Oh Earth!
Where are the past? — and wherefore had they birth?
The dead are thy inheritors — and we
But bubbles on thy surface; and the key
Of thy profundity is in the grave,
The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
Where I would walk in spirit, and behold
Our elements resolved to things untold,
And fathom hidden wonders, and explore
The essence of great bosoms now no more." * *

"TO AUGUSTA.

"My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine.
Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
Go where I will, to me thou art the same —
A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny, —
A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

"The first were nothing — had I still the last,
It were the haven of my happiness;
But other claims and other ties thou hast,
And mine is not the wish to make them less.
A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
Reversed for him our grandsire's * fate of yore, —
He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

"If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,
I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks,
The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen
My errors with defensive paradox;
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

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* "Admiral Byron was remarkable for never making a voyage without a tempest. He was known to the sailors by the facetious name of 'Foul-weather Jack.'

"But, though it were tempest-tost,
Still his bark could not be lost.

He returned safely from the wreck of the Wager (in Anson's Voyage), and subsequently circumnavigated the world, many years after, as commander of a similar expedition."

" Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd
The gift, — a fate, or will that walk'd astray;
And I at times have found the struggle hard,
And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay:
But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

" Kingdoms and empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
And when I look on this, the petty spray
Of my own years of trouble, which have roll'd
Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:
Something — I know not what — does still uphold
A spirit of slight patience; not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

" Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
Within me, — or perhaps a cold despair,
Brought on when ills habitually recur, —
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
(For even to this may change of soul refer,
And with light armour we may learn to bear,)
Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
The chief companion of a calmer lot.

" I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
Which do remember me of where I dwelt
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks;
And even at moments I could think I see
Some living thing to love — but none like thee.

" Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
A fund for contemplation; — to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;
But something worthier do such scenes inspire:
Here to be lonely is not desolate,
For much I view which I could most desire,
And, above all, a lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

" Oh that thou wert but with me! — but I grow
The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude which I have vaunted so
Has lost its praise in this but one regret;
There may be others which I less may show; —
I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

" I did remind thee of our own dear lake *,
By the old hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

" The world is all before me; I but ask
Of nature that with which she will comply —
It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.
She was my early friend, and now shall be
My sister — till I look again on thee.

* The lake of Newstead Abbey.

" I can reduce all feelings but this one;
And that I would not; — for at length I see
Such scenes as those wherein my life begun.
The earliest — even the only paths for me —
Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be;
The passions which have torn me would have slept;
I had not suffer'd, and *thou* hadst not wept.

" With false ambition what had I to do?
Little with love, and least of all with fame;
And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
And made me all which they can make — a name.
Yet this was not the end I did pursue;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
But all is over — I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

" And for the future, this world's future may
From me demand but little of my care;
I have outlived myself by many a day;
Having survived so many things that were;
My years have been no slumber, but the prey
Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
Of life which might have fill'd a century,
Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.

" And for the remnant which may be to come
I am content; and for the past I feel
Not thankless, — for within the crowded sum
Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,
And for the present, I would not benumb
My feelings farther. — Nor shall I conceal
That with all this I still can look around
And worship Nature with a thought profound.

" For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
I know myself secure, as thou in mine :
We were and are — I am, even as thou art —
Beings who ne'er each other can resign ;
It is the same, together or apart,
From life's commencement to its slow decline
We are entwined — let death come slow or fast,
The tie which bound the first endures the last!"

In the month of August, Mr. M. G. Lewis arrived to pass some time with him; and he was soon after visited by Mr. Richard Sharpe, of whom he makes such honourable mention in the Journal already given, and with whom, as I have heard this gentleman say, it now gave him evident pleasure to converse about their common friends in England. Among those who appeared to have left the strongest impressions of interest and admiration on his mind was (as easily will be believed by all who know this distinguished person) Sir James Mackintosh.

Soon after the arrival of his friends, Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. S. Davies, he set out, as we have seen, with the former on a tour through the Bernese Alps, — after accomplishing which journey, about the beginning of October he took his departure, accompanied by the same gentleman, for Italy.

The first letter of the following series was, it will be seen, written a few days before he left Diodati.

LETTER 247. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Diodati, Oct. 5. 1816.

"Save me a copy of 'Buck's Richard III.' republished by Longman; but do not send out more books, I have too many.

"The 'Monody' is in too many paragraphs, which makes it unintelligible to me; if any one else understands it in the present form, they are wiser; however, as it cannot be rectified till my return, and has been already published, even publish it on in the collection — it will fill up the place of the omitted epistle.

"Strike out 'by request of a friend,' which is sad trash, and must have been done to make it ridiculous.

"Be careful in the printing the stanzas beginning,

"'Though the day of my destiny,' &c.

which I think well of as a composition.

"'The Antiquary' is not the best of the three, but much above all the last twenty years, saving its elder brothers. Holcroft's Memoirs are valuable as showing strength of endurance in the man, which is worth more than all the talent in the world.

"And so you have been publishing 'Margaret of Anjou' and an Assyrian tale, and refusing W. W.'s Waterloo, and the 'Hue and Cry.' I know not which most to admire, your rejections or acceptances. I believe that *prose* is, after all, the most reputable, for certes, if one could foresee — but I won't go on —

that is with this sentence; but poetry is, I fear, incurable. God help me! if I proceed in this scribbling, I shall have frittered away my mind before I am thirty, but it is at times a real relief to me. For the present — good evening."

LETTER 248. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Martigny, October 9. 1816.

"Thus far on my way to Italy. We have just passed the 'Pisse-Vache' (one of the first torrents in Switzerland) in time to view the iris which the sun flings along it before noon.

"I have written to you twice lately. Mr. Davies, I hear, is arrived. He brings the original MS. which you wished to see. Recollect that the printing is to be from that which Mr. Shelley brought; and recollect, also, that the concluding stanzas of Childe Harold (those to my *daughter*) which I had not made up my mind whether to publish or not when they were *first* written (as you will see marked on the margin of the first copy), I had (and have) fully determined to publish with the rest of the Canto, as in the copy which you received by Mr. Shelley, before I sent it to England.

"Our weather is very fine, which is more than the summer has been. — At Milan I shall expect to hear from you. Address either to Milan, *poste restante*, or by way of Geneva, to the care of Monsr. Hentsch, Banquier. I write these few lines in case my other letter should not reach you: I trust one of them will.

" P. S. My best respects and regards to Mr. Gifford. Will you tell him it may perhaps be as well to put a short note to that part relating to *Clarens*, merely to say, that of course the description does not refer to that particular spot so much as to the command of scenery round it? I do not know that this is necessary, and leave it to Mr. G.'s choice, as my editor,— if he will allow me to call him so at this distance."

LETTER 249. TO MR. MURRAY.

" Milan, October 15. 1816.

" I hear that Mr. Davies has arrived in England,— but that of some letters, &c., committed to his care by Mr. H., only *half* have been delivered. This intelligence naturally makes me feel a little anxious for mine, and amongst them for the MS., which I wished to have compared with the one sent by me through the hands of Mr. Shelley. I trust that *it* has arrived safely,—and indeed not less so, that some little crystals, &c., from Mont Blanc, for my daughter and my nieces, have reached their address. Pray have the goodness to ascertain from Mr. Davies that no accident (by custom-house or loss) has befallen them, and satisfy me on this point at your earliest convenience.

" If I recollect rightly, you told me that Mr. Gifford had kindly undertaken to correct the press (at my request) during my absence — at least I hope so. It will add to my many obligations to that gentleman.

" I wrote to you, on my way here, a short note, dated Martigny. Mr. Hobhouse and myself arrived

here a few days ago, by the Simplon and Lago Maggiore route. Of course we visited the Borromean Islands, which are fine, but too artificial. The Simplon is magnificent in its nature and its art, — both God and man have done wonders, — to say nothing of the devil who must certainly have had a hand (or a hoof) in some of the rocks and ravines through and over which the works are carried.

" Milan is striking — the cathedral superb. The city altogether reminds me of Seville, but a little inferior. We had heard divers bruits, and took precautions on the road, near the frontier, against some ' many worthy fellows (*i. e.* felons) that were out,' and had ransacked some preceding travellers, a few weeks ago, near Sesto, — or *C*esto, I forget which, — of cash and raiment, besides putting them in bodily fear, and lodging about twenty slugs in the retreating part of a courier belonging to Mr. Hope. But we were not molested, and I do not think in any danger, except of making mistakes in the way of cocking and priming whenever we saw an old house, or an ill-looking thicket, and now and then suspecting the ' true men,' who have very much the appearance of the thieves of other countries. What the thieves may look like, I know not, nor desire to know, for it seems they come upon you in bodies of thirty (' in buckram and Kendal green ') at a time, so that voyagers have no great chance. It is something like poor dear Turkey in that respect, but not so good, for there you can have as great a body of rogues to match the regular banditti; but here the gens d'armes are said to be no great things,

and as for one's own people, one can't carry them about like Robinson Crusoe with a gun on each shoulder.

" I have been to the Ambrosian library — it is a fine collection — full of MSS. edited and unedited. I enclose you a list of the former recently published: these are matters for your literati. For me, in my simple way, I have been most delighted with a correspondence of letters, all original and amatory, between *Lucretia Borgia* and *Cardinal Bembo*, preserved there. I have pored over them and a lock of her hair, the prettiest and fairest imaginable — I never saw fairer — and shall go repeatedly to read the epistles over and over; and if I can obtain some of the hair by fair means, I shall try. I have already persuaded the librarian to promise me copies of the letters, and I hope he will not disappoint me. They are short, but very simple, sweet, and to the purpose; there are some copies of verses in Spanish also by her; the tress of her hair is long, and, as I said before, beautiful. The Brera gallery of paintings has some fine pictures, but nothing of a collection. Of painting I know nothing; but I like a Guercino — a picture of Abraham putting away Hagar and Ishmael — which seems to me natural and goodly. The Flemish school, such as I saw it in Flanders, I utterly detested, despised, and abhorred; it might be painting, but it was not nature; the Italian is pleasing, and their *ideal* very noble.

" The Italians I have encountered here are very intelligent and agreeable. In a few days I am to meet Monti. By the way, I have just heard an

anecdote of Beccaria, who published such admirable things against the punishment of death. As soon as his book was out, his servant (having read it, I presume) stole his watch; and his master, while correcting the press of a second edition, did all he could to have him hanged by way of advertisement.

"I forgot to mention the triumphal arch begun by Napoleon, as a gate to this city. It is unfinished, but the part completed worthy of another age and the same country. The society here is very oddly carried on,—at the theatre, and the theatre only,—which answers to our opera. People meet there as at a rout, but in very small circles. From Milan I shall go to Venice. If you write, write to Geneva, as before — the letter will be forwarded.

"Yours ever."

LETTER 250. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Milan, November 1. 1816.

"I have recently written to you rather frequently but without any late answer. Mr. Hobhouse and myself set out for Venice in a few days; but you had better still address to me at Mr. Hentsch's, Banquier, Geneva; he will forward your letters.

"I do not know whether I mentioned to you some time ago, that I had parted with the Dr. Polidori a few weeks previous to my leaving Diodati. I know no great harm of him; but he had an alacrity of getting into scrapes, and was too young and heedless; and having enough to attend to in my own concerns, and without time to become his tutor, I

thought it much better to give him his congé. He arrived at Milan some weeks before Mr. Hobhouse and myself. About a week ago, in consequence of a quarrel at the theatre with an Austrian officer, in which he was exceedingly in the wrong, he has contrived to get sent out of the territory, and is gone to Florence. I was not present, the pit having been the scene of altercation; but on being sent for from the Cavalier Breme's box, where I was quietly staring at the ballet, I found the man of medicine begirt with grenadiers, arrested by the guard, conveyed into the guard-room, where there was much swearing in several languages. They were going to keep him there for the night; but on my giving my name, and answering for his apparition next morning, he was permitted egress. Next day he had an order from the government to be gone in twenty-four hours, and accordingly gone he is, some days ago. We did what we could for him, but to no purpose; and indeed he brought it upon himself, as far as I could learn, for I was not present at the squabble itself. I believe this is the real state of his case; and I tell it you because I believe things sometimes reach you in England in a false or exaggerated form. We found Milan very polite and hospitable*, and

* With Milan, however, or its society, the noble traveller was far from being pleased, and in his Memoranda, I recollect, he described his stay there to be "like a ship under quarantine." Among other persons whom he met in the society of that place was M. Beyle, the ingenious author of "L'Histoire de la Peinture en Italie," who thus describes the impression their first interview left upon him: —

have the same hopes of Verona and Venice. I have filled my paper.

" Ever yours," &c.

" Ce fut pendant l'automne de 1816, que je le rencontrai au théâtre de la *Scala*, à Milan, dans la loge de M. Louis de Brême. Je fus frappé des yeux de Lord Byron au moment où il écoutait un sestetto d'un opéra de Mayer intitulé *Elena*. Je n'ai vu de ma vie, rien de plus beau ni de plus expressif. Encore aujourd'hui, si je viens à penser à l'expression qu'un grand peintre devrait donner au génie, cette tête sublime reparaît tout-à-coup devant moi. J'eus un instant d'enthousiasme, et oubliant la juste répugnance que tout homme un peu fier doit avoir à se faire présenter à un pair d'Angleterre, je priai M. de Brême de m'introduire à Lord Byron, je me trouvai le lendemain à dîner chez M. de Brême, avec lui, et le célèbre Monti, l'immortel auteur de la *Basvigliana*. On parla poésie, on en vint à demander quels étaient les douze plus beaux vers faits depuis un siècle, en Français, en Italien, en Anglais. Les Italiens présens s'accordèrent à désigner les douze premiers vers de la *Mascheroniana* de Monti, comme ce que l'on avait fait de plus beau dans leur langue, depuis cent ans. *Monti* voulut bien nous les réciter. Je regardai Lord Byron, il fut ravi. La nuance de hauteur, ou plutôt l'air d'un homme *qui se trouve avoir à repousser une importunité*, qui déparait un peu sa belle figure, disparut tout-à-coup pour faire à l'expression du bonheur. Le premier chant de la *Mascheroniana*, que Monti récita presque en entier, vaincu par les acclamations des auditeurs, causa la plus vive sensation à l'auteur de Childe Harold. Je n'oublierai jamais l'expression divine de ses traits ; c'était l'air serein de la puissance et du génie, et suivant moi, Lord Byron n'avait, en ce moment, aucune affectation à se reprocher."

LETTER 251. TO MR. MOORE.

"Verona, November 6. 1816.

"My dear Moore,

"Your letter, written before my departure from England, and addressed to me in London, only reached me recently. Since that period, I have been over a portion of that part of Europe which I had not already seen. About a month since, I crossed the Alps from Switzerland to Milan, which I left a few days ago, and am thus far on my way to Venice, where I shall probably winter. Yesterday I was on the shores of the Benacus, with his *fluctibus et fremitu*. Catullus's Sirmium has still its name and site, and is remembered for his sake: but the very heavy autumnal rains and mists prevented our quitting our route, (that is, Hobhouse and myself, who are at present voyaging together,) as it was better not to see it at all than to a great disadvantage.

"I found on the Benacus the same tradition of a city, still visible in calm weather below the waters, which you have preserved of Lough Neagh, 'When the clear, cold eve's declining.' I do not know that it is authorised by records; but they tell you such a story, and say that the city was swallowed up by an earthquake. We moved to-day over the frontier to Verona, by a road suspected of thieves, — 'the wise *convey* it call,' — but without molestation. I shall remain here a day or two to gape at the usual marvels, — amphitheatre, paintings, and all that time-tax of travel, — though Catullus, Claudian, and Shakspeare have done more for Verona than it ever

did for itself. They still pretend to show, I believe, the 'tomb of all the Capulets' — we shall see.

"Among many things at Milan, one pleased me particularly, viz. the correspondence (in the prettiest love-letters in the world) of Lucretia Borgia with Cardinal Bembo, (who, *you say*, made a very good cardinal,) and a lock of her hair, and some Spanish verses of hers,—the lock very fair and beautiful. I took one single hair of it as a relic, and wished sorely to get a copy of one or two of the letters; but it is prohibited: *that* I don't mind; but it was impracticable; and so I only got some of them by heart. They are kept in the Ambrosian Library, which I often visited to look them over — to the scandal of the librarian, who wanted to enlighten me with sundry valuable MSS., classical, philosophical, and pious. But I stick to the Pope's daughter, and wish myself a cardinal.

"I have seen the finest parts of Switzerland, the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Swiss and Italian lakes; for the beauties of which, I refer you to the Guide-book. The north of Italy is tolerably free from the English; but the south swarms with them, I am told. Madame de Staël I saw frequently at Copet, which she renders remarkably pleasant. She has been particularly kind to me. I was for some months her neighbour, in a country house called Diodati, which I had on the Lake of Geneva. My plans are very uncertain; but it is probable that you will see me in England in the spring. I have some business there. If you write to me, will you address to the care of Mons. Hentsch, Banquier, Geneva, who re-

ceives and forwards my letters. Remember me to Rogers, who wrote to me lately, with a short account of your poem, which, I trust, is near the light. He speaks of it most highly.

"My health is very endurable, except that I am subject to casual giddiness and faintness, which is so like a fine lady, that I am rather ashamed of the disorder. When I sailed, I had a physician with me, whom, after some months of patience, I found it expedient to part with, before I left Geneva some time. On arriving at Milan, I found this gentleman in very good society, where he prospered for some weeks: but, at length, at the theatre he quarrelled with an Austrian officer, and was sent out by the government in twenty-four hours. I was not present at his squabble; but, on hearing that he was put under arrest, I went and got him out of his confinement, but could not prevent his being sent off, which, indeed, he partly deserved, being quite in the wrong, and having begun a row for row's sake. I had preceded the Austrian government some weeks myself, in giving him his congé from Geneva. He is not a bad fellow, but very young and hot-headed, and more likely to incur diseases than to cure them. Hobhouse and myself found it useless to intercede for him. This happened some time before we left Milan. He is gone to Florence.

At Milan I saw, and was visited by, Monti, the most celebrated of the living Italian poets. He seems near sixty; in face he is like the late Cooke the actor. His frequent changes in politics have made him very unpopular as a man. I saw many

more of their literati; but none whose names are well known in England, except Acerbi. I lived much with the Italians, particularly with the Marquis of Breme's family, who are very able and intelligent men, especially the Abate. There was a famous improvvisatore who held forth while I was there. His fluency astonished me; but, although I understand Italian, and speak it (with more readiness than accuracy), I could only carry off a few very commonplace mythological images, and one line about Artemisia, and another about Algiers, with sixty words of an entire tragedy about Etocles and Polynices. Some of the Italians liked him — others called his performance 'seccatura' (a devilish good word, by the way) — and all Milan was in controversy about him.

"The state of morals in these parts is in some sort lax. A mother and son were pointed out at the theatre, as being pronounced by the Milanese world to be of the Theban dynasty — but this was all. The narrator (one of the first men in Milan) seemed to be not sufficiently scandalised by the taste or the tie. All society in Milan is carried on at the opera: they have private boxes, where they play at cards, or talk, or any thing else; but (except at the Cassino) there are no open houses, or balls, &c. &c.

"The peasant girls have all very fine dark eyes, and many of them are beautiful. There are also two dead bodies in fine preservation — one Saint Carlo Boromeo, at Milan; the other not a saint, but a chief, named Visconti, at Monza — both of which appeared very agreeable. In one of the Boromean

isles (the Isola bella), there is a large laurel — the largest known — on which Buonaparte, staying there just before the battle of Marengo, carved with his knife the word 'Battaglia.' I saw the letters, now half worn out and partly erased.

"Excuse this tedious letter. To be tiresome is the privilege of old age and absence: I avail myself of the latter, and the former I have anticipated. If I do not speak to you of my own affairs, it is not from want of confidence, but to spare you and myself. My day is over — what then? — I have had it. To be sure, I have shortened it; and if I had done as much by this letter, it would have been as well. But you will forgive that, if not the other faults of

"Yours ever and most affectionately,

"B.

"P. S. November 7. 1816.

"I have been over Verona. The amphitheatre is wonderful — beats even Greece. Of the truth of Juliet's story they seem tenacious to a degree, insisting on the fact — giving a date (1303), and showing a tomb. It is a plain, open, and partly decayed sarcophagus, with withered leaves in it, in a wild and desolate conventual garden, once a cemetery, now ruined to the very graves. The situation struck me as very appropriate to the legend, being blighted as their love. I have brought away a few pieces of the granite, to give to my daughter and my nieces. Of the other marvels of this city, paintings, antiquities, &c., excepting the tombs of the Scaliger princes, I have no pretensions

to judge. The gothic monuments of the Scaligers pleased me, but 'a poor virtuoso am I,' and ever yours."

It must have been observed, in my account of Lord Byron's life previous to his marriage, that, without leaving altogether unnoticed (what, indeed, was too notorious to be so evaded) certain affairs of gallantry in which he had the reputation of being engaged, I have thought it right, besides refraining from such details in my narrative, to suppress also whatever passages in his Journals and Letters might be supposed to bear too personally or particularly on the same delicate topics. Incomplete as the strange history of his mind and heart must, in one of its most interesting chapters, be left by these omissions, still a deference to that peculiar sense of decorum in this country, which marks the mention of such frailties as hardly a less crime than the commission of them, and, still more, the regard due to the feelings of the living, who ought not rashly to be made to suffer for the errors of the dead, have combined to render this sacrifice, however much it may be regretted, necessary.

We have now, however, shifted the scene to a region where less caution is requisite;—where, from the different standard applied to female morals in these respects, if the wrong itself be not lessened by this diminution of the consciousness of it, less scruple may be, at least, felt towards persons so circumstanced, and whatever delicacy we may think right to exercise in speaking of their frailties must be

with reference rather to our views and usages than theirs.

Availing myself, with this latter qualification, of the greater latitude thus allowed me, I shall venture so far to depart from the plan hitherto pursued, as to give, with but little suppression, the noble poet's letters relative to his Italian adventures. To throw a veil altogether over these irregularities of his private life would be to afford — were it even practicable — but a partial portraiture of his character; while, on the other hand, to rob him of the advantage of being himself the historian of his errors (where no injury to others can flow from the disclosure) would be to deprive him of whatever softening light can be thrown round such transgressions by the vivacity and fancy, the passionate love of beauty, and the strong yearning after affection which will be found to have, more or less, mingled with even the least refined of his attachments. Neither is any great danger to be apprehended from the sanction or seduction of such an example; as they who would dare to plead the authority of Lord Byron for their errors must first be able to trace them to the same palliating sources, — to that sensibility, whose very excesses showed its strength and depth, — that stretch of imagination, to the very verge, perhaps, of what reason can bear without giving way, — that whole combination, in short, of grand but disturbing powers, which alone could be allowed to extenuate such moral derangement, but which, even in him thus dangerously gifted, were insufficient to excuse it.

Having premised these few observations, I shall now proceed, with less interruption, to lay his correspondence, during this and the two succeeding years, before the reader:—

LETTER 252. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, November 17. 1816.

"I wrote to you from Verona the other day in my progress hither, which letter I hope you will receive. Some three years ago, or it may be more, I recollect your telling me that you had received a letter from our friend Sam, dated 'On board his gondola.' *My* gondola is, at this present, waiting for me on the canal; but I prefer writing to you in the house, it being autumn—and rather an English autumn than otherwise. It is my intention to remain at Venice during the winter, probably, as it has always been (next to the East) the greenest island of my imagination. It has not disappointed me; though its evident decay would, perhaps, have that effect upon others. But I have been familiar with ruins too long to dislike desolation. Besides, I have fallen in love, which, next to falling into the canal, (which would be of no use, as I can swim,) is the best or the worst thing I could do. I have got some extremely good apartments in the house of a 'Merchant of Venice,' who is a good deal occupied with business, and has a wife in her twenty-second year. Marianna (that is her name) is in her appearance altogether like an antelope. She has the large, black, oriental eyes, with that peculiar expression in them which is seen rarely among *Eu-*

ropeans—even the Italians—and which many of the Turkish women give themselves by tinging the eyelid,—an art not known out of that country, I believe. This expression she has *naturally*,—and something more than this. In short, I cannot describe the effect of this kind of eye,—at least upon me. Her features are regular, and rather aquiline—mouth small—skin clear and soft, with a kind of hectic colour—forehead remarkably good: her hair is of the dark gloss, curl, and colour of Lady J**'s: her figure is light and pretty, and she is a famous songstress—scientifically so; her natural voice (in conversation, I mean) is very sweet; and the naïveté of the Venetian dialect is always pleasing in the mouth of a woman.

"November 23.

"You will perceive that my description, which was proceeding with the minuteness of a passport, has been interrupted for several days.

"December 5.

"Since my former dates, I do not know that I have much to add on the subject, and, luckily, nothing to take away; for I am more pleased than ever with my Venetian, and begin to feel very serious on that point—so much so, that I shall be silent.

"By way of divertisement, I am studying daily, at an Armenian monastery, the Armenian language. I found that my mind wanted something craggy to break upon; and this—as the most difficult thing I could discover here for an amusement—I have chosen, to torture me into attention. It is a rich

language, however, and would amply repay any one the trouble of learning it. I try, and shall go on;—but I answer for nothing, least of all for my intentions or my success. There are some very curious MSS. in the monastery, as well as books; translations also from Greek originals, now lost, and from Persian and Syriac, &c.; besides works of their own people. Four years ago the French instituted an Armenian professorship. Twenty pupils presented themselves on Monday morning, full of noble ardour, ingenuous youth, and impregnable industry. They persevered, with a courage worthy of the nation and of universal conquest, till Thursday; when *fifteen* of the *twenty* succumbed to the six-and-twentieth letter of the alphabet. It is, to be sure, a Waterloo of an Alphabet—that must be said for them. But it is so like these fellows, to do by it as they did by their sovereigns—abandon both; to parody the old rhymes, 'Take a thing and give a thing'—'Take a king and give a king.' They are the worst of animals, except their conquerors.

"I hear that H—n is your neighbour, having a living in Derbyshire. You will find him an excellent-hearted fellow, as well as one of the cleverest; a little, perhaps, too much japanned by preferment in the church and the tuition of youth, as well as inoculated with the disease of domestic felicity, besides being over-run with fine feelings about woman and *constancy* (that small change of Love, which people exact so rigidly, receive in such counterfeit coin, and repay in baser metal); but, otherwise, a very worthy man, who has lately got a pretty wife, and (I suppose)

a child by this time. Pray remember me to him, and say that I know not which to envy most his neighbourhood—him, or you.

"Of Venice I shall say little. You must have seen many descriptions; and they are most of them like. It is a poetical place; and classical, to us, from Shakspeare and Otway. I have not yet sinned against it in verse, nor do I know that I shall do so, having been tuneless since I crossed the Alps, and feeling, as yet, no renewal of the 'estro.' By the way, I suppose you have seen 'Glenarvon.' Madame de Staël lent it me to read from Copet last autumn. It seems to me that if the authoress had written the *truth*, and nothing but the truth—the whole truth—the romance would not only have been more *romantic*, but more entertaining. As for the likeness, the picture can't be good—I did not sit long enough. When you have leisure, let me hear from and of you, believing me ever and truly yours most affectionately, B.

"P. S. Oh! *your poem*—is it out? I hope Longman has paid his thousands: but don't you do as H * * T * *'s father did, who, having made money by a quarto tour, became a vinegar merchant; when, lo! his vinegar turned sweet (and be d—d to it) and ruined him. My last letter to you (from Verona) was enclosed to Murray—have you got it? Direct to me *here, poste restante*. There are no English here at present. There were several in Switzerland—some women; but, except Lady Dalrymple Hamil-

ton, most of them as ugly as virtue—at least, those that I saw."

LETTER 253. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, December 24. 1816.

"I have taken a fit of writing to you, which portends postage—once from Verona—once from Venice, and again from Venice—*thrice* that is. For this you may thank yourself, for I heard that you complained of my silence—so, here goes for garrulity.

"I trust that you received my other twain of letters. My 'way of life' (or 'May of life,' which is it, according to the commentators?)—my 'way of life' is fallen into great regularity. In the mornings I go over in my gondola to babble Armenian with the friars of the convent of St. Lazarus, and to help one of them in correcting the English of an English and Armenian grammar which he is publishing. In the evenings I do one of many nothings—either at the theatres, or some of the conversaziones, which are like our routs, or rather worse, for the women sit in a semicircle by the lady of the mansion, and the men stand about the room. To be sure, there is one improvement upon ours—instead of lemonade with their ices, they hand about stiff *rum-punch—punch*, by my palate; and this they think *English*. I would not disabuse them of so agreeable an error,—'no, not for Venice.'

"Last night I was at the Count Governor's, which, of course, comprises the best society, and is very

much like other gregarious meetings in every country, — as in ours, — except that, instead of the Bishop of Winchester, you have the Patriarch of Venice, and a motley crew of Austrians, Germans, noble Venetians, foreigners, and, if you see a quiz, you may be sure he is a Consul. Oh, by the way, I forgot, when I wrote from Verona, to tell you that at Milan I met with a countryman of yours — a Colonel * * * *, a very excellent, good-natured fellow, who knows and shows all about Milan, and is, as it were, a native there. He is particularly civil to strangers, and this is his history, — at least, an episode of it.

" Six-and-twenty years ago, Col. * * * *, then an ensign, being in Italy, fell in love with the Marchesa * * * *, and she with him. The lady must be, at least, twenty years his senior. The war broke out; he returned to England, to serve — not his country, for that's Ireland — but England, which is a different thing; and *she* — heaven knows what she did. In the year 1814, the first annunciation of the Definitive Treaty of Peace (and tyranny) was developed to the astonished Milanese by the arrival of Col. * * * *, who, flinging himself full length at the feet of Mad. * * * *, murmured forth, in half-forgotten Irish Italian, eternal vows of indelible constancy. The lady screamed, and exclaimed, 'Who are you?' The Colonel cried, 'What! don't you know me? I am so and so,' &c. &c. &c.; till, at length, the Marchesa, mounting from reminiscence to reminiscence, through the lovers of the intermediate twenty-five years, arrived at last at the recollection of her *povero* sub-

lieutenant. She then said, 'Was there ever such virtue?' (that was her very word) and, being now a widow, gave him apartments in her palace, reinstated him in all the rights of wrong, and held him up to the admiring world as a miracle of incontinent fidelity, and the unshaken Abdiel of absence.

"Methinks this is as pretty a moral tale as any of Marmontel's. Here is another. The same lady, several years ago, made an escapade with a Swede, Count Fersen (the same whom the Stockholm mob quartered and lapidated not very long since), and they arrived at an Osteria on the road to Rome or thereabouts. It was a summer evening, and, while they were at supper, they were suddenly regaled by a symphony of fiddles in an adjacent apartment, so prettily played, that, wishing to hear them more distinctly, the Count rose, and going into the musical society, said, 'Gentlemen, I am sure that, as a company of gallant cavaliers, you will be delighted to show your skill to a lady, who feels anxious,' &c. &c. The men of harmony were all acquiescence — every instrument was tuned and toned, and, striking up one of their most ambrosial airs, the whole band followed the Count to the lady's apartment. At their head was the first fiddler, who, bowing and fiddling at the same moment, headed his troop and advanced up the room. Death and discord! — it was the Marquis himself, who was on a serenading party in the country, while his spouse had run away from town. The rest may be imagined — but, first of all, the lady tried to persuade him that she was

there on purpose to meet him, and had chosen this method for an harmonic surprise. So much for this gossip, which amused me when I heard it, and I send it to you, in the hope it may have the like effect. Now we'll return to Venice.

The day after to-morrow (to-morrow being Christmas-day) the Carnival begins. I dine with the Countess Albrizzi and a party, and go to the opera. On that day the Phenix, (not the Insurance Office, but) the theatre of that name, opens: I have got me a box there for the season, for two reasons, one of which is, that the music is remarkably good. The Contessa Albrizzi, of whom I have made mention, is the De Staël of Venice, not young, but a very learned, unaffected, good-natured woman, very polite to strangers, and, I believe, not at all dissolute, as most of the women are. She has written very well on the works of Canova, and also a volume of Characters, besides other printed matter. She is of Corfu, but married a dead Venetian — that is, dead since he married.

"My flame (my 'Donna' whom I spoke of in my former epistle, my Marianna) is still my Marianna, and I, her — what she pleases. She is by far the prettiest woman I have seen here, and the most loveable I have met with any where — as well as one of the most singular. I believe I told you the rise and progress of our *liaison* in my former letter. Lest that should not have reached you, I will merely repeat, that she is a Venetian, two-and-twenty years old, married to a merchant well to do in the world, and that she has great black oriental eyes, and all the

qualities which her eyes promise. Whether being in love with her has steeled me or not, I do not know; but I have not seen many other women who seem pretty. The nobility, in particular, are a sad-looking race — the gentry rather better. And now, what art *thou* doing?

" What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
Sighing or suing now,
Rhyming or wooing now,
Billing or cooing now,
Which, Thomas Moore?

Are you not near the Luddites? By the Lord! if there's a row, but I'll be among ye! How go on the weavers — the breakers of frames — the Lutherans of politics — the reformers?

" As the Liberty lads o'er the sea
Bought their freedom, and cheaply, with blood,
So we, boys, we
" Will *die* fighting, or *live* free,
And down with all kings but King Ludd!

" When the web that we weave is complete,
And the shuttle exchanged for the sword,
We will fling the winding-sheet
O'er the despot at our feet,
And dye it deep in the gore he has pour'd.

" Though black as his heart its hue,
Since his veins are corrupted to mud,
Yet this is the dew
Which the tree shall renew
Of Liberty, planted by Ludd!

"There's an amiable *chanson* for you — all impromptu. I have written it principally to shock your neighbour * * * *, who is all clergy and loyalty — mirth and innocence — milk and water.

"But the Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore,
The Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore,
Masking and humming,
Fifing and drumming,
Guitarring and strumming,
Oh Thomas Moore."

The other night I saw a new play,—and the author. The subject was the sacrifice of Isaac. The play succeeded, and they called for the author — according to continental custom—and he presented himself, a noble Venetian, Mali, or Malapiero, by name. Mala was his name, and *pessima* his production, — at least, I thought so, and I ought to know, having read more or less of five hundred Drury Lane offerings, during my coadjutorship with the sub-and-super Committee.

"When does your poem of poems come out? I hear that the E. R. has cut up Coleridge's Christabel, and declared against me for praising it. I praised it, firstly, because I thought well of it; secondly, because Coleridge was in great distress, and, after doing what little I could for him in essentials, I thought that the public avowal of my good opinion might help him further, at least with the booksellers. I am very sorry that J * * has attacked

him, because, poor fellow, it will hurt him in mind and pocket. As for me, he's welcome—I shall never think less of J * * for any thing he may say against me or mine in future.

"I suppose Murray has sent you, or will send (for I do not know whether they are out or no) the poem, or poesies, of mine, of last summer. By the mass! they are sublime—'Ganion Coheriza'—gainsay who dares! Pray, let me hear from you, and of you, and, at least, let me know that you have received these three letters. Direct, right *here, poste restante.*

"Ever and ever, &c.

"P. S. I heard the other day of a pretty trick of a bookseller, who has published some d—d nonsense, swearing the bastards to me, and saying he gave me five hundred guineas for them. He lies—I never wrote such stuff, never saw the poems, nor the publisher of them, in my life, nor had any communication, directly or indirectly, with the fellow. Pray say as much for me, if need be. I have written to Murray, to make him contradict the impostor."

LETTER 254. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, November 25. 1816.

"It is some months since I have heard from or of you—I think, not since I left Diodati. From Milan I wrote once or twice; but have been here some little time, and intend to pass the winter without removing. I was much pleased with the Lago di

Garda, and with Verona, particularly the amphitheatre, and a sarcophagus in a convent garden, which they show as Juliet's: they insist on the *truth* of her history. Since my arrival at Venice, the lady of the Austrian governor told me that between Verona and Vicenza there are still ruins of the castle of the *Montecchi*, and a chapel once appertaining to the Capulets. Romeo seems to have been of *Vicenza* by the tradition; but I was a good deal surprised to find so firm a faith in Bandello's novel, which seems really to have been founded on a fact.

"Venice pleases me as much as I expected, and I expected much. It is one of those places which I know before I see them, and has always haunted me the most after the East. I like the gloomy gaiety of their gondolas, and the silence of their canals. I do not even dislike the evident decay of the city, though I regret the singularity of its vanished costume; however, there is much left still; the Carnival, too, is coming.

"St. Mark's, and indeed Venice, is most alive at night. The theatres are not open till *nine*, and the society is proportionably late. All this is to my taste, but most of your countrymen miss and regret the rattle of hackney coaches, without which they can't sleep.

"I have got remarkably good apartments in a private house; I see something of the inhabitants (having had a good many letters to some of them); I have got my gondola; I read a little, and luckily could speak Italian (more fluently than correctly) long ago. I am studying, out of curiosity, the

Venetian dialect, which is very naïve, and soft, and peculiar, though not at all classical; I go out frequently, and am in very good contentment.

"The Helen of Canova (a bust which is in the house of Madame the Countess d'Albrizzi, whom I know) is, without exception, to my mind, the most perfectly beautiful of human conceptions, and far beyond my ideas of human execution.

"In this beloved marble view,
Above the works and thoughts of man,
What Nature *could*, but *would not*, do,
And Beauty and Canova *can!*
Beyond imagination's power,
Beyond the bard's defeated art,
With immortality her dower,
Behold the *Helen* of the *heart!*

Talking of the 'heart' reminds me that I have fallen in love — fathomless love; but lest you should make some splendid mistake, and envy me the possession of some of those princesses or countesses with whose affections your English voyagers are apt to invest themselves, I beg leave to tell you that my goddess is only the wife of a 'Merchant of Venice;' but then she is pretty as an antelope, is but two-and-twenty years old, has the large, black, oriental eyes, with the Italian countenance, and dark glossy hair, of the curl and colour of Lady J * *'s. Then she has the voice of a lute, and the song of a seraph (though not quite so sacred), besides a long postscript of graces, virtues, and accomplishments, enough to furnish out a new chapter for Solomon's Song. But her great

merit is finding out mine — there is nothing so amiable as discernment.

"The general race of women appear to be handsome; but in Italy, as on almost all the Continent, the highest orders are by no means a well-looking generation, and indeed reckoned by their countrymen very much otherwise. Some are exceptions, but most of them as ugly as Virtue herself.

"If you write, address to me here, *poste restante*, as I shall probably stay the winter over. I never see a newspaper, and know nothing of England, except in a letter now and then from my sister. Of the MS. sent you, I know nothing, except that you have received it, and are to publish it, &c. &c.: but when, where, and how, you leave me to guess; but it don't much matter.

"I suppose you have a world of works passing through your process for next year? When does Moore's poem appear? I sent a letter for him, addressed to your care, the other day."

LETTER 255. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, December 4. 1816.

"I have written to you so frequently of late, that you will think me a bore; as I think you a very impolite person, for not answering my letters from Switzerland, Milan, Verona, and Venice. There are some things I wanted, and want, to know, viz. whether Mr. Davies, of inaccurate memory, had or had not delivered the MS. as delivered to him; because, if he has not, you will find that he will boun-

tifully bestow transcriptions on all the curious of his acquaintance, in which case you may probably find your publication anticipated by the 'Cambridge' or other Chronicles. In the next place,—I forget what was next; but in the third place, I want to hear whether you have yet published, or when you mean to do so, or why you have not done so, because in your last (Sept. 20th,—you may be ashamed of the date), you talked of this being done immediately.

"From England I hear nothing, and know nothing of any thing or any body. I have but one correspondent (except Mr. Kinnaird on business now and then), and her a female; so that I know no more of your island, or city, than the Italian version of the French papers chooses to tell me, or the advertisements of Mr. Colburn tagged to the end of your Quarterly Review for the year *ago*. I wrote to you at some length last week, and have little to add, except that I have begun, and am proceeding in, a study of the Armenian language, which I acquire, as well as I can, at the Armenian convent, where I go every day to take lessons of a learned friar, and have gained some singular and not useless information with regard to the literature and customs of that oriental people. They have an establishment here—a church and convent of ninety monks, very learned and accomplished men, some of them. They have also a press, and make great efforts for the enlightening of their nation. I find the language (which is *twin*, the *literal* and the *vulgar*) difficult, but not invincible (at least I hope not). I shall go on. I found it necessary to twist my

mind round some severer study, and this, as being the hardest I could devise here, will be a file for the serpent.

"I mean to remain here till the spring, so address to me *directly* to *Venice, poste restante.* — Mr. Hobhouse, for the present, is gone to Rome, with his brother, brother's wife, and sister, who overtook him here: he returns in two months. I should have gone too, but I fell in love, and must stay that over. I should think *that* and the Armenian alphabet will last the winter. The lady has, luckily for me, been less obdurate than the language, or, between the two, I should have lost my remains of sanity. By the way, she is not an Armenian but a Venetian, as I believe I told you in my last. As for Italian, I am fluent enough, even in its Venetian modification, which is something like the Somersetshire version of English; and as for the more classical dialects, I had not forgot my former practice much during my voyaging.

"Yours, ever and truly,

"B.

"P. S. Remember me to Mr. Gifford."

LETTER 256. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, Dec. 9. 1816.

"In a letter from England, I am informed that a man named Johnson has taken upon himself to publish some poems called a 'Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, a Tempest, and an Address to my Daughter,' &c., and to attribute them to me, adding that he had paid five

hundred guineas for them. The answer to this is short: *I never wrote such poems, never received the sum he mentions, nor any other in the same quarter, nor* (as far as moral or mortal certainty can be sure) *ever had, directly or indirectly, the slightest communication with Johnson in my life;* not being aware that the person existed till this intelligence gave me to understand that there were such people. Nothing surprises me, or this perhaps *would*, and most things amuse me, or this probably would *not*. With regard to myself, the man has merely *lied;* that's natural; his betters have set him the example. But with regard to you, his assertion may perhaps injure you in your publications; and I desire that it may receive the most public and unqualified contradiction. I do not know that there is any punishment for a thing of this kind, and if there were, I should not feel disposed to pursue this ingenious mountebank farther than was necessary for his confutation; but thus far it may be necessary to proceed.

"You will make what use you please of this letter; and Mr. Kinnaird, who has power to act for me in my absence, will, I am sure, readily join you in any steps which it may be proper to take with regard to the absurd falsehood of this poor creature. As you will have recently received several letters from me on my way to Venice, as well as two written since my arrival, I will not at present trouble you further.

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. Pray let me hear that you have received this letter. Address to Venice, *poste restante*.

"To prevent the recurrence of similar fabrications,

you may state, that I consider myself responsible for no publication from the year 1812 up to the present date which is not from your press. I speak of course from that period, because, previously, Cawthorn and Ridge had both printed compositions of mine. 'A Pilgrimage to Jerusalem!' How the devil should I write about *Jerusalem*, never having yet been there? As for 'A Tempest,' it was *not* a *tempest* when I left England, but a very fresh breeze: and as to an 'Address to little Ada,' (who, by the way, is a year old to-morrow,) I never wrote a line about her, except in 'Farewell' and the third Canto of Childe Harold."

LETTER 257. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, Dec. 27. 1816.

"As the demon of silence seems to have possessed you, I am determined to have my revenge in postage; this is my sixth or seventh letter since summer and Switzerland. My last was an injunction to contradict and consign to confusion that Cheapside impostor, who (I heard by a letter from your island) had thought proper to append my name to his spurious poesy, of which I know nothing, nor of his pretended purchase or copyright. I hope you have, at least, received *that* letter.

"As the news of Venice must be very interesting to you, I will regale you with it.

"Yesterday being the feast of St. Stephen, every mouth was put in motion. There was nothing but fiddling and playing on the virginals, and all kinds of conceits and divertissements, on every canal of this aquatic city. I dined with the Countess Albrizzi

and a Paduan and Venetian party, and afterwards went to the opera, at the Fenice theatre (which opens for the Carnival on that day), — the finest, by the way, I have ever seen: it beats our theatres hollow in beauty and scenery, and those of Milan and Brescia bow before it. The opera and its sirens were much like other operas and women, but the subject of the said opera was something edifying; it turned — the plot and conduct thereof — upon a fact narrated by Livy of a hundred and fifty married ladies having poisoned a hundred and fifty husbands in good old times. The bachelors of Rome believed this extraordinary mortality to be merely the common effect of matrimony or a pestilence; but the surviving Benedicts, being all seized with the cholic, examined into the matter, and found that 'their possets had been drugged;' the consequence of which was, much scandal and several suits at law. This is really and truly the subject of the musical piece at the Fenice; and you can't conceive what pretty things are sung and recitativoed about the *horrenda strage*. The conclusion was a lady's head about to be chopped off by a lictor, but (I am sorry to say) he left it on, and she got up and sung a trio with the two Consuls, the Senate in the back-ground being chorus. The ballet was distinguished by nothing remarkable, except that the principal she-dancer went into convulsions because she was not applauded on her first appearance; and the manager came forward to ask if there was 'ever a physician in the theatre.' There was a Greek one in my box, whom I wished very much to volunteer his services, being sure that

in this case these would have been the last convulsions which would have troubled the ballarina; but he would not. The crowd was enormous, and in coming out, having a lady under my arm, I was obliged, in making way, almost to 'beat a Venetian and traduce the state,' being compelled to regale a person with an English punch in the guts, which sent him as far back as the squeeze and the passage would admit. He did not ask for another, but, with great signs of disapprobation and dismay, appealed to his compatriots, who laughed at him.

"I am going on with my Armenian studies in a morning, and assisting and stimulating in the English portion of an English and Armenian grammar, now publishing at the convent of St. Lazarus.

"The superior of the friars is a bishop, and a fine old fellow, with the beard of a meteor. Father Paschal is also a learned and pious soul. He was two years in England.

"I am still dreadfully in love with the Adriatic lady whom I spake of in a former letter, (and *not* in *this* — I add, for fear of mistakes, for the only one mentioned in the first part of this epistle is elderly and bookish, two things which I have ceased to admire,) and love in this part of the world is no sinecure. This is also the season when every body make up their intrigues for the ensuing year, and cut for partners for the next deal.

"And now, if you don't write, I don't know what I won't say or do, nor what I will. Send me some news — good news. Yours very truly, &c. &c. &c.

"B.

"P. S. Remember me to Mr. Gifford, with all duty.

"I hear that the Edinburgh Review has cut up Coleridge's Christabel, and me for praising it, which omen, I think, bodes no great good to your forthcome or coming Canto and Castle (of Chillon). My run of luck within the last year seems to have taken a turn every way; but never mind, I will bring myself through in the end — if not, I can be but where I began. In the mean time, I am not displeased to be where I am — I mean, at Venice. My Adriatic nymph is this moment here, and I must therefore repose from this letter."

LETTER 258. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, Jan. 2. 1817.

"Your letter has arrived. Pray, in publishing the third Canto, have you *omitted* any passages? I hope *not;* and indeed wrote to you on my way over the Alps to prevent such an incident. Say in your next whether or not the *whole* of the Canto (as sent to you) has been published. I wrote to you again the other day, (*twice*, I think,) and shall be glad to hear of the reception of those letters.

"To-day is the 2d of January. On this day *three* years ago The Corsair's publication is dated, I think, in my letter to Moore. On this day *two* years I married, ('Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,' — I sha'n't forget the day in a hurry,) and it is odd enough that I this day received a letter from you announcing the publication of Childe Harold, &c. &c.

on the day of the date of 'The Corsair;' and I also received one from my sister, written on the 10th of December, my daughter's birth-day (and relative chiefly to my daughter), and arriving on the day of the date of my marriage, this present 2d of January, the month of my birth, — and various other astrologous matters, which I have no time to enumerate.

"By the way, you might as well write to Hentsch, my Geneva banker, and enquire whether the *two packets* consigned to his care were or were not delivered to Mr. St. Aubyn, or if they are still in his keeping. One contains papers, letters, and all the original MS. of your third Canto, as first conceived; and the other, some bones from the field of Morat. Many thanks for your news, and the good spirits in which your letter is written.

"Venice and I agree very well; but I do not know that I have any thing new to say, except of the last new opera, which I sent in my late letter. The Carnival is commencing, and there is a good deal of fun here and there — besides business; for all the world are making up their intrigues for the season, changing, or going on upon a renewed lease. I am very well off with Marianna, who is not at all a person to tire me; firstly, because I do not tire of a woman *personally*, but because they are generally bores in their disposition; and, secondly, because she is amiable, and has a tact which is not always the portion of the fair creation; and, thirdly, she is very pretty; and, fourthly — but there is no occasion for further specification. So far we have gone on very well; as to the future, I never anticipate — *carpe*

diem — the past at least is one's own, which is one reason for making sure of the present. So much for my proper *liaison*.

"The general state of morals here is much the same as in the Doges' time; a woman is virtuous (according to the code) who limits herself to her husband and one lover; those who have two, three, or more, are a little *wild*; but it is only those who are indiscriminately diffuse, and form a low connection, such as the Princess of Wales with her courier, (who, by the way, is made a knight of Malta,) who are considered as overstepping the modesty of marriage. In Venice, the nobility have a trick of marrying with dancers and singers; and, truth to say, the women of their own order are by no means handsome; but the general race, the women of the second and other orders, the wives of the merchants, and proprietors, and untitled gentry, are mostly *bel' sangue*, and it is with these that the more amatory connections are usually formed. There are also instances of stupendous constancy. I know a woman of fifty who never had but one lover, who dying early, she became devout, renouncing all but her husband. She piques herself, as may be presumed, upon this miraculous fidelity, talking of it occasionally with a species of misplaced morality, which is rather amusing. There is no convincing a woman here that she is in the smallest degree deviating from the rule of right or the fitness of things in having an *amoroso*. The great sin seems to lie in concealing it, or having more than one, that is, unless such an

extension of the prerogative is understood and approved of by the prior claimant.

"In another sheet, I send you some sheets of a grammar, English and Armenian, for the use of the Armenians, of which I promoted, and indeed induced, the publication. (It cost me but a thousand francs — French livres.) I still pursue my lessons in the language without any rapid progress, but advancing a little daily. Padre Paschal, with some little help from me, as translator of his Italian into English, is also proceeding in a MS. Grammar for the *English* acquisition of Armenian, which will be printed also, when finished.

"We want to know if there are any Armenian types and letter-press in England, at Oxford, Cambridge, or elsewhere? You know, I suppose, that, many years ago, the two Whistons published in England an original text of a history of Armenia, with their own Latin translation? Do those types still exist? and where? Pray enquire among your learned acquaintance.

"When this Grammar (I mean the one now printing) is done, will you have any objection to take forty or fifty copies, which will not cost in all above five or ten guineas, and try the curiosity of the learned with a sale of them? Say yes or no, as you like. I can assure you that they have some very curious books and MSS., chiefly translations from Greek originals now lost. They are, besides, a much respected and learned community, and the study of their language was taken up with great

ardour by some literary Frenchmen in Buonaparte's time.

"I have not done a stitch of poetry since I left Switzerland, and have not, at present, the *estro* upon me. The truth is, that you are *afraid* of having a *fourth* Canto *before* September, and of another copyright, but I have at present no thoughts of resuming that poem, nor of beginning any other. If I write, I think of trying prose, but I dread introducing living people, or applications which might be made to living people. Perhaps one day or other I may attempt some work of fancy in prose, descriptive of Italian manners and of human passions; but at present I am pre-occupied. As for poesy, mine is the *dream* of the sleeping passions; when they are awake, I cannot speak their language, only in their somnambulism, and just now they are not dormant.

"If Mr. Gifford wants *carte blanche* as to The Siege of Corinth, he has it, and may do as he likes with it.

"I sent you a letter contradictory of the Cheapside man (who invented the story you speak of) the other day. My best respects to Mr. Gifford, and such of my friends as you may see at your house. I wish you all prosperity and new year's gratulation, and am

"Yours," &c.

To the Armenian Grammar, mentioned in the foregoing letter, the following interesting fragment, found among his papers, seems to have been intended as a Preface: —

" The English reader will probably be surprised to find my name associated with a work of the present description, and inclined to give me more credit for my attainments as a linguist than they deserve.

" As I would not willingly be guilty of a deception, I will state, as shortly as I can, my own share in the compilation, with the motives which led to it. On my arrival at Venice, in the year 1816, I found my mind in a state which required study, and study of a nature which should leave little scope for the imagination, and furnish some difficulty in the pursuit.

" At this period I was much struck — in common, I believe, with every other traveller — with the society of the Convent of St. Lazarus, which appears to unite all the advantages of the monastic institution, without any of its vices.

" The neatness, the comfort, the gentleness, the unaffected devotion, the accomplishments, and the virtues of the brethren of the order, are well fitted to strike the man of the world with the conviction that ' there is another and a better ' even in this life.

" These men are the priesthood of an oppressed and a noble nation, which has partaken of the proscription and bondage of the Jews and of the Greeks, without the sullenness of the former or the servility of the latter. This people has attained riches without usury, and all the honours that can be awarded to slavery without intrigue. But they have long occupied, nevertheless, a part of ' the

House of Bondage,' who has lately multiplied her many mansions. It would be difficult, perhaps, to find the annals of a nation less stained with crimes than those of the Armenians, whose virtues have been those of peace, and their vices those of compulsion. But whatever may have been their destiny — and it has been bitter — whatever it may be in future, their country must ever be one of the most interesting on the globe; and perhaps their language only requires to be more studied to become more attractive. If the Scriptures are rightly understood, it was in Armenia that Paradise was placed — Armenia, which has paid as dearly as the descendants of Adam for that fleeting participation of its soil in the happiness of him who was created from its dust. It was in Armenia that the flood first abated, and the dove alighted. But with the disappearance of Paradise itself may be dated almost the unhappiness of the country; for though long a powerful kingdom, it was scarcely ever an independent one, and the satraps of Persia and the pachas of Turkey have alike desolated the region where God created man in his own image."

LETTER 259. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, January 28. 1817.

"Your letter of the 8th is before me. The remedy for your plethora is simple — abstinence. I was obliged to have recourse to the like some years ago, I mean in point of *diet*, and, with the exception of some convivial weeks and days, (it might be

months, now and then,) have kept to Pythagoras ever since. For all this, let me hear that you are better. You must not *indulge* in 'filthy beer,' nor in porter, nor eat *suppers* — the last are the devil to those who swallow dinner.

"I am truly sorry to hear of your father's misfortune — cruel at any time, but doubly cruel in advanced life. However, you will, at least, have the satisfaction of doing your part by him, and depend upon it, it will not be in vain. Fortune, to be sure, is a female, but not such a b * * as the rest (always excepting your wife and my sister from such sweeping terms); for she generally has some justice in the long run. I have no spite against her, though between her and Nemesis I have had some sore gauntlets to run — but then I have done my best to deserve no better. But to *you*, she is a good deal in arrear, and she will come round — mind if she don't: you have the vigour of life, of independence, of talent, spirit, and character all with you. What you can do for yourself, you have done and will do; and surely there are some others in the world who would not be sorry to be of use, if you would allow them to be useful, or at least attempt it.

"I think of being in England in the spring. If there is a row, by the sceptre of King Ludd, but I'll be one; and if there is none, and only a continuance of 'this meek, piping time of peace,' I will take a cottage a hundred yards to the south of your abode, and become your neighbour; and we will compose such canticles, and hold such dialogues, as shall be the terror of the *Times* (including the newspaper of

that name), and the wonder, and honour, and praise of the Morning Chronicle and posterity.

" I rejoice to hear of your forthcoming in February — though I tremble for the ' magnificence ' which you attribute to the new Childe Harold. I am glad you like it ; it is a fine indistinct piece of poetical desolation, and my favourite. I was half mad during the time of its composition, between metaphysics, mountains, lakes, love unextinguishable, thoughts unutterable, and the night-mare of my own delinquencies. I should, many a good day, have blown my brains out, but for the recollection that it would have given pleasure to my mother-in-law ; and, even *then*, if I could have been certain to haunt her —— but I won't dwell upon these trifling family matters.

" Venice is in the *estro* of her carnival, and I have been up these last two nights at the ridotto and the opera, and all that kind of thing. Now for an adventure. A few days ago a gondolier brought me a billet without a subscription, intimating a wish on the part of the writer to meet me either in gondola, or at the island of San Lazaro, or at a third rendezvous, indicated in the note. ' I know the country's disposition well ' — in Venice ' they do let Heaven see those tricks they dare not show,' &c. &c. ; so, for all response, I said that neither of the three places suited me ; but that I would either be at home at ten at night *alone*, or be at the ridotto at midnight, where the writer might meet me masked. At ten o'clock I was at home and alone (Marianna was gone with her husband to a conversazione), when the door of my

apartment opened, and in walked a well-looking and (for an Italian) *bionda* girl of about nineteen, who informed me that she was married to the brother of my *amorosa*, and wished to have some conversation with me. I made a decent reply, and we had some talk in Italian and Romaic (her mother being a Greek of Corfu), when lo! in a very few minutes in marches, to my very great astonishment, Marianna S * *, *in propriâ personâ*, and after making a most polite courtesy to her sister-in-law and to me, without a single word seizes her said sister-in-law by the hair, and bestows upon her some sixteen slaps, which would have made your ear ache only to hear their echo. I need not describe the screaming which ensued. The luckless visiter took flight. I seized Marianna, who, after several vain efforts to get away in pursuit of the enemy, fairly went into fits in my arms; and, in spite of reasoning, eau de Cologne, vinegar, half a pint of water, and God knows what other waters beside, continued so till past midnight.

"After damning my servants for letting people in without apprizing me, I found that Marianna in the morning had seen her sister-in-law's gondolier on the stairs, and, suspecting that his apparition boded her no good, had either returned of her own accord, or been followed by her maids or some other spy of her people to the conversazione, from whence she returned to perpetrate this piece of pugilism. I had seen fits before, and also some small scenery of the same genus in and out of our island: but this was not all. After about an hour, in comes — who? why, Signor S * *, her lord and husband, and finds me

with his wife fainting upon a sofa, and all the apparatus of confusion, dishevelled hair, hats, handkerchiefs, salts, smelling bottles — and the lady as pale as ashes, without sense or motion. His first question was, 'What is all this?' The lady could not reply — so I did. I told him the explanation was the easiest thing in the world; but in the mean time it would be as well to recover his wife — at least, her senses. This came about in due time of suspiration and respiration.

"You need not be alarmed — jealousy is not the order of the day in Venice, and daggers are out of fashion, while duels, on love matters, are unknown — at least, with the husbands. But, for all this, it was an awkward affair; and though he must have known that I made love to Marianna, yet I believe he was not, till that evening, aware of the extent to which it had gone. It is very well known that almost all the married women have a lover; but it is usual to keep up the forms, as in other nations. I did not, therefore, know what the devil to say. I could not out with the truth, out of regard to her, and I did not choose to lie for my sake; — besides, the thing told itself. I thought the best way would be to let her explain it as she chose (a woman being never at a loss — the devil always sticks by them) — only determining to protect and carry her off, in case of any ferocity on the part of the Signor. I saw that he was quite calm. She went to bed, and next day — how they settled it, I know not, but settle it they did. Well — then I had to explain to Marianna about this never-to-be-sufficiently-confounded sister-

in-law; which I did by swearing innocence, eternal constancy, &c. &c. But the sister-in-law, very much discomposed with being treated in such wise, has (not having her own shame before her eyes) told the affair to half Venice, and the servants (who were summoned by the fight and the fainting) to the other half. But, here, nobody minds such trifles, except to be amused by them. I don't know whether you will be so, but I have scrawled a long letter out of these follies.

"Believe me ever," &c.

LETTER 260. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, January 24. 1817.

"I have been requested by the Countess Albrizzi here to present her with 'the Works;' and wish you therefore to send me a copy, that I may comply with her requisition. You may include the last published, of which I have seen and know nothing, but from your letter of the 13th of December.

"Mrs. Leigh tells me that most of her friends prefer the two first Cantos. I do not know whether this be the general opinion or not (it is *not hers*); but it is natural it should be so. I, however, think differently, which is natural also; but who is right, or who is wrong, is of very little consequence.

"Dr. Polidori, as I hear from him by letter from Pisa, is about to return to England, to go to the Brazils on a medical speculation with the Danish consul. As you are in the favour of the powers that be, could you not get him some letters of recom-

mendation from some of your government friends to some of the Portuguese settlers? He understands his profession well, and has no want of general talents; his faults are the faults of a pardonable vanity and youth. His remaining with me was out of the question: I have enough to do to manage my own scrapes; and as precepts without example are not the most gracious homilies, I thought it better to give him his congé: but I know no great harm of him, and some good. He is clever and accomplished; knows his profession, by all accounts, well; and is honourable in his dealings, and not at all malevolent. I think, with luck, he will turn out a useful member of society (from which he will lop the diseased members) and the College of Physicians. If you can be of any use to him, or know any one who can, pray be so, as he has his fortune to make. He has kept a *medical journal* under the eye of *Vacca* (the first surgeon on the Continent) at Pisa: Vacca has corrected it, and it must contain some valuable hints or information on the practice of this country. If you can aid him in publishing this also, by your influence with your brethren, do; I do not ask you to publish it yourself, because that sort of request is too personal and embarrassing. He has also a tragedy, of which, having seen nothing, I say nothing: but the very circumstance of his having made these efforts (if they are only efforts), at one-and-twenty, is in his favour, and proves him to have good dispositions for his own improvement. So if, in the way of commendation or recommendation, you can aid his objects with your government friends, I wish you would.

I should think some of your Admiralty Board might be likely to have it in their power."

LETTER 261. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, February 15. 1817.

"I have received your two letters, but not the parcel you mention. As the Waterloo spoils are arrived, I will make you a present of them, if you choose to accept of them; pray do.

"I do not exactly understand from your letter what has been omitted, or what not, in the publication; but I shall see probably some day or other. I could not attribute any but a *good* motive to Mr. Gifford or yourself in such omission; but as our politics are so very opposite, we should probably differ as to the passages. However, if it is only a *note* or notes, or a line or so, it cannot signify. You say 'a *poem;' what* poem? You can tell me in your next.

"Of Mr. Hobhouse's quarrel with the Quarterly Review, I know very little except * *'s article itself, which was certainly harsh enough; but I quite agree that it would have been better not to answer — particularly after Mr. *W. W.*, who never more will trouble you, trouble you. I have been uneasy, because Mr. H. told me that his letter or preface was to be addressed to *me*. Now, he and I are friends of many years; I have many obligations to him, and he none to me, which have not been cancelled and more than repaid; but Mr. Gifford and I are friends also, and he has moreover been literally so, through thick and thin, in despite of difference of years,

morals, habits, and even *politics;* and therefore I feel in a very awkward situation between the two, Mr. Gifford and my friend Hobhouse, and can only wish that they had no difference, or that such as they have were accommodated. The Answer I have not seen, for — it is odd enough for people so intimate — but Mr. Hobhouse and I are very sparing of our literary confidences. For example, the other day he wished to have a MS. of the third Canto to read over to his brother, &c., which was refused; — and I have never seen his journals, nor he mine — (I only kept the short one of the mountains for my sister) — nor do I think that hardly ever he or I saw any of the other's productions previous to their publication.

"The article in the Edinburgh Review on Coleridge I have not seen; but whether I am attacked in it or not, or in any other of the same journal, I shall never think ill of Mr. Jeffrey on that account, nor forget that his conduct towards me has been certainly most handsome during the last four or more years.

"I forgot to mention to you that a kind of Poem in dialogue * (in blank verse) or Drama, from which 'The Incantation' is an extract, begun last summer in Switzerland, is finished; it is in three acts; but of a very wild, metaphysical, and inexplicable kind. Almost all the persons — but two or three — are Spirits of the earth and air, or the waters; the scene is in the Alps; the hero a kind of magician, who is tormented by a species of remorse, the cause of

* Manfred.

which is left half unexplained. He wanders about invoking these Spirits, which appear to him, and are of no use; he at last goes to the very abode of the Evil Principle, *in propriâ personâ*, to evocate a ghost, which appears, and gives him an ambiguous and disagreeable answer; and in the third act he is found by his attendants dying in a tower where he had studied his art. You may perceive by this outline that I have no great opinion of this piece of fantasy; but I have at least rendered it *quite impossible* for the stage, for which my intercourse with Drury Lane has given me the greatest contempt.

"I have not even copied it off, and feel too lazy at present to attempt the whole; but when I have, I will send it you, and you may either throw it into the fire or not."

LETTER 262. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, February 25. 1817.

"I wrote to you the other day in answer to your letter; at present I would trouble you with a commission, if you would be kind enough to undertake it.

"You, perhaps, know Mr. Love, the jeweller, of Old Bond Street? In 1813, when in the intention of returning to Turkey, I purchased of him, and paid (*argent comptant*) for about a dozen snuff-boxes, of more or less value, as presents for some of my Mussulman acquaintance. These I have now with me. The other day, having occasion to make an alteration in the lid of one (to place a portrait in it), it has turned

out to be *silver-gilt* instead of *gold*, for which last it was sold and paid for. This was discovered by the workman in trying it, before taking off the hinges and working upon the lid. I have of course recalled and preserved the box *in statu quo*. What I wish you to do is, to see the said Mr. Love, and inform him of this circumstance, adding, from me, that I will take care he shall not have done this with impunity.

" If there is no remedy in law, there is at least the equitable one of making known his *guilt*, — that is, his silver-*gilt*, and be d—d to him.

" I shall carefully preserve all the purchases I made of him on that occasion for my return, as the plague in Turkey is a barrier to travelling there at present, or rather the endless quarantine which would be the consequence before one could land in coming back. Pray state the matter to him with due ferocity.

" I sent you the other day some extracts from a kind of Drama which I had begun in Switzerland and finished here; you will tell me if they are received. They were only in a letter. I have not yet had energy to copy it out, or I would send you the whole in different covers.

" The Carnival closed this day last week.

" Mr. Hobhouse is still at Rome, I believe. I am at present a little unwell; — sitting up too late and some subsidiary dissipations have lowered my blood a good deal; but I have at present the quiet and temperance of Lent before me.

" Believe me, &c.

"P. S. Remember me to Mr. Gifford.—I have not received your parcel or parcels.—Look into 'Moore's (Dr. Moore's) View of Italy' for me; in one of the volumes you will find an account of the *Doge Valiere* (it ought to be Falieri) and his conspiracy, or the motives of it. Get it transcribed for me, and send it in a letter to me soon. I want it, and cannot find so good an account of that business here; though the veiled patriot, and the place where he was crowned, and afterwards decapitated, still exist and are shown. I have searched all their histories; but the policy of the old aristocracy made their writers silent on his motives, which were a private grievance against one of the patricians.

"I mean to write a tragedy on the subject, which appears to me very dramatic; an old man, jealous, and conspiring against the state of which he was the actually reigning chief. The last circumstance makes it the most remarkable and only fact of the kind in all history of all nations."

LETTER 263. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, February 28. 1817.

"You will, perhaps, complain as much of the frequency of my letters now, as you were wont to do of their rarity. I think this is the fourth within as many moons. I feel anxious to hear from you, even more than usual, because your last indicated that you were unwell. At present, I am on the invalid regimen myself. The Carnival — that is, the latter part of it, and sitting up late o'nights, had knocked me up a

little. But it is over, — and it is now Lent, with all its abstinence and sacred music.

" The mumming closed with a masked ball at the Fenice, where I went, as also to most of the ridottos, &c. &c.; and, though I did not dissipate much upon the whole, yet I find ' the sword wearing out the scabbard,' though I have but just turned the corner of twenty-nine.

" So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.
For the sword out-wears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And Love itself have rest.
Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

I have lately had some news of litter*atoor*, as I heard the editor of the Monthly pronounce it once upon a time. I hear that W. W. has been publishing and responding to the attacks of the Quarterly, in the learned Perry's Chronicle. I read his poesies last autumn, and, amongst them, found an epitaph on his bull-dog, and another on *myself*. But I beg leave to assure him (like the astrologer Partridge) that I am not only alive now, but was alive also at the time he wrote it. Hobhouse has (I hear, also) expectorated a letter against the Quarterly, addressed to me. I

feel awkwardly situated between him and Gifford, both being my friends.

" And this is your month of going to press — by the body of Diana! (a Venetian oath,) I feel as anxious — but not fearful for you — as if it were myself coming out in a work of humour, which would, you know, be the antipodes of all my previous publications. I don't think you have any thing to dread but your own reputation. You must keep up to that. As you never showed me a line of your work, I do not even know your measure; but you must send me a copy by Murray forthwith, and then you shall hear what I think. I dare say you are in a pucker. Of all authors, you are the only really *modest* one I ever met with, — which would sound oddly enough to those who recollect your morals when you were young — that is, when you were *extremely* young — I don't mean to stigmatise you either with years or morality.

" I believe I told you that the E. R. had attacked me, in an article on Coleridge (I have not seen it) — '*Et tu*, Jeffrey?' — 'there is nothing but roguery in villanous man.' But I absolve him of all attacks, present and future; for I think he had already pushed his clemency in my behoof to the utmost, and I shall always think well of him. I only wonder he did not begin before, as my domestic destruction was a fine opening for all the world, of which all who could did well to avail themselves.

" If I live ten years longer, you will see, however, that it is not over with me — I don't mean in literature, for that is nothing; and it may seem odd enough

to say, I do not think it my vocation. But you will see that I shall do something or other — the times and fortune permitting — that, 'like the cosmogony, or creation of the world, will puzzle the philosophers of all ages.' But I doubt whether my constitution will hold out. I have, at intervals, exorcised it most devilishly.

"I have not yet fixed a time of return, but I think of the spring. I shall have been away a year in April next. You never mention Rogers, nor Hodgson, your clerical neighbour, who has lately got a living near you. Has he also got a child yet? — his desideratum, when I saw him last.

"Pray let me hear from you, at your time and leisure, believing me ever and truly and affectionately," &c.

LETTER 264. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, March 3. 1817.

"In acknowledging the arrival of the article from the 'Quarterly*,' which I received two days ago, I cannot express myself better than in the words of my sister Augusta, who (speaking of it) says, that it is written in a spirit 'of the most feeling and kind nature.' It is, however, something more; it seems to me (as far as the subject of it may be permitted

* An article in No. 31. of this Review, written, as Lord Byron afterwards discovered, by Sir Walter Scott, and well meriting, by the kind and generous spirit that breathes through it, the warm and lasting gratitude it awakened in the noble poet.

to judge) to be *very well* written as a composition, and I think will do the journal no discredit, because even those who condemn its partiality must praise its generosity. The temptations to take another and a less favourable view of the question have been so great and numerous, that, what with public opinion, politics, &c. he must be a gallant as well as a good man, who has ventured in that place, and at this time, to write such an article even anonymously. Such things are, however, their own reward; and I even flatter myself that the writer, whoever he may be (and I have no guess), will not regret that the perusal of this has given me as much gratification as any composition of that nature could give, and more than any other has given, — and I have had a good many in my time of one kind or the other. It is not the mere praise, but there is a *tact* and a *delicacy* throughout, not only with regard to me, but to *others*, which, as it had not been observed *elsewhere*, I had till now doubted whether it could be observed *any where*.

"Perhaps some day or other you will know or tell me the writer's name. Be assured, had the article been a harsh one, I should not have asked it.

"I have lately written to you frequently, with *extracts*, &c., which I hope you have received, or will receive, with or before this letter.—Ever since the conclusion of the Carnival I have been unwell, (do not mention this, on any account, to Mrs. Leigh; for if I grow worse, she will know it too soon, and if I get better, there is no occasion that she should know it at all,) and have hardly stirred out of the

house. However, I don't want a physician, and if I did, very luckily those of Italy are the worst in the world, so that I should still have a chance. They have, I believe, one famous surgeon, Vacca, who lives at Pisa, who might be useful in case of dissection: — but he is some hundred miles off. My malady is a sort of lowish fever, originating from what my 'pastor and master,' Jackson, would call 'taking too much out of one's self.' However, I am better within this day or two.

"I missed seeing the new Patriarch's procession to St. Mark's the other day (owing to my indisposition), with six hundred and fifty priests in his rear — a 'goodly army.' The admirable government of Vienna, in its edict from thence, authorising his installation, prescribed, as part of the pageant, 'a *coach* and four horses.' To show how very, very '*German* to the matter' this was, you have only to suppose our parliament commanding the Archbishop of Canterbury to proceed from Hyde Park Corner to St. Paul's Cathedral in the Lord Mayor's barge, or the Margate hoy. There is but St. Mark's Place in all Venice broad enough for a carriage to move, and it is paved with large smooth flag-stones, so that the chariot and horses of Elijah himself would be puzzled to manœuvre upon it. Those of Pharaoh might do better; for the canals — and particularly the Grand Canal — are sufficiently capacious and extensive for his whole host. Of course, no coach could be attempted; but the Venetians, who are very naïve as well as arch, were much amused with the ordinance.

"The Armenian Grammar is published; but my Armenian studies are suspended for the present till my head aches a little less. I sent you the other day, in two covers, the first Act of 'Manfred,' a drama as mad as Nat. Lee's Bedlam tragedy, which was in 25 acts and some odd scenes: — mine is but in Three Acts.

"I find I have begun this letter at the wrong end never mind; I must end it, then, at the right.

"Yours ever very truly and obligedly," &c.

LETTER 265. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, March 9. 1817.

"In remitting the third Act of the sort of dramatic poem of which you will by this time have received the two first (at least I hope so), which were sent within the last three weeks, I have little to observe, except that you must not publish it (if it ever is published) without giving me previous notice. I have really and truly no notion whether it is good or bad; and as this was not the case with the principal of my former publications, I am, therefore, inclined to rank it very humbly. You will submit it to Mr. Gifford, and to whomsoever you please besides. With regard to the question of copyright (if it ever comes to publication), I do not know whether you would think *three hundred* guineas an over-estimate; if you do, you may diminish it: I do not think it worth more; so you may see I make some difference between it and the others.

"I have received your two Reviews (but not the

'Tales of my Landlord'); the Quarterly I acknowledged particularly to you, on its arrival, ten days ago. What you tell me of Perry petrifies me; it is a rank imposition. In or about February or March, 1816, I was given to understand that Mr. Croker was not only a coadjutor in the attacks of the Courier in 1814, but the author of some lines tolerably ferocious, then recently published in a morning paper. Upon this I wrote a reprisal. The whole of the lines I have forgotten, and even the purport of them I scarcely remember; for on *your* assuring me that he was not, &c. &c., I put them into the *fire before your face*, and there *never was* but that *one rough* copy. Mr. Davies, the only person who ever heard them read, wanted a copy, which I refused. If, however, by some *impossibility*, which I cannot divine, the ghost of these rhymes should walk into the world, I never will deny what I have really written, but hold myself personally responsible for satisfaction, though I reserve to myself the right of disavowing all or any *fabrications*. To the previous facts you are a witness, and best know how far my recapitulation is correct; and I request that you will inform Mr. Perry from me, that I wonder he should permit such an abuse of my name in his paper; I say an *abuse*, because my absence, at least, demands some respect, and my presence and positive sanction could alone justify him in such a proceeding, even were the lines mine; and if false, there are no words for him. I repeat to you that the original was burnt before you on your *assurance*, and there *never* was a *copy*, nor even a verbal repetition, — very much to

the discomfort of some zealous Whigs, who bored me for them (having heard it bruited by Mr. Davies that there were such matters) to no purpose; for, having written them solely with the notion that Mr. Croker was the aggressor, and for *my own* and not party reprisals, I would not lend me to the zeal of any sect when I was made aware that he was not the writer of the offensive passages. *You know*, if there was such a thing, I would not deny it. I mentioned it openly at the time to you, and you will remember why and where I destroyed it; and no power nor wheedling on earth should have made, or could make, me (if I recollected them) give a copy after that, unless I was well assured that Mr. Croker was really the author of that which you assured me he was not.

"I intend for England this spring, where I have some affairs to adjust; but the post hurries me. For this month past I have been unwell, but am getting better, and thinking of moving homewards towards May, without going to Rome, as the unhealthy season comes on soon, and I can return when I have settled the business I go upon, which need not be long. I should have thought the Assyrian tale very succeedable.

"I saw, in Mr. W. W.'s poetry, that he had written my epitaph; I would rather have written his.

"The thing I have sent you, you will see at a glimpse, could never be attempted or thought of for the stage; I much doubt it for publication even. It is too much in my old style; but I composed it

actually with a *horror* of the stage, and with a view to render the thought of it impracticable, knowing the zeal of my friends that I should try that for which I have an invincible repugnance, viz. a representation.

"I certainly am a devil of a mannerist, and must leave off; but what could I do? Without exertion of some kind, I should have sunk under my imagination and reality. My best respects to Mr. Gifford, to Walter Scott, and to all friends.

"Yours ever."

LETTER 266. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, March 10. 1817.

"I wrote again to you lately, but I hope you won't be sorry to have another epistle. I have been unwell this last month, with a kind of slow and low fever, which fixes upon me at night, and goes off in the morning; but, however, I am now better. In spring it is probable we may meet; at least I intend for England, where I have business, and hope to meet you in *your* restored health and additional laurels.

"Murray has sent me the Quarterly and the Edinburgh. When I tell you that Walter Scott is the author of the article in the former, you will agree with me that such an article is still more honourable to him than to myself. I am perfectly pleased with Jeffrey's also, which I wish you to tell him, with my remembrances — not that I suppose

it is of any consequence to him, or ever could have been, whether I am pleased or not, but simply in my private relation to him, as his well-wisher, and it may be one day as his acquaintance. I wish you would also add, what you know, that I was not, and, indeed, am not even *now*, the misanthropical and gloomy gentleman he takes me for, but a facetious companion, well to do with those with whom I am intimate, and as loquacious and laughing as if I were a much cleverer fellow.

"I suppose now I shall never be able to shake off my sables in public imagination, more particularly since my moral * * clove down my fame. However, nor that, nor more than that, has yet extinguished my spirit, which always rises with the rebound.

"At Venice we are in Lent, and I have not lately moved out of doors, my feverishness requiring quiet, and — by way of being more quiet — here is the Signora Marianna just come in and seated at my elbow.

"Have you seen * * * 's book of poesy? and, if you have seen it, are you not delighted with it? And have you — I really cannot go on: there is a pair of great black eyes looking over my shoulder, like the angel leaning over St. Matthew's, in the old frontispieces to the Evangelists, — so that I must turn and answer them instead of you.

"Ever," &c.

LETTER 267. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, March 25. 1817.

"I have at last learned, in default of your own writing (or *not* writing — which should it be? for I am not very clear as to the application of the word *default*) from Murray, two particulars of (or belonging to) you; one, that you are removing to Hornsey, which is, I presume, to be nearer London; and the other, that your Poem is announced by the name of Lalla Rookh. I am glad of it, — first, that we are to have it at last, and next, I like a tough title myself—witness The Giaour and Childe Harold, which choked half the Blues at starting. Besides, it is the tail of Alcibiades's dog, — not that I suppose you want either dog or tail. Talking of tail, I wish you had not called it a '*Persian Tale.*'* Say a 'Poem' or 'Romance,' but not 'Tale.' I am very sorry that I called some of my own things 'Tales,' because I think that they are something better. Besides, we have had Arabian, and Hindoo, and Turkish, and Assyrian Tales. But, after all, this is frivolous in me; you won't, however, mind my nonsense.

* He had been misinformed on this point,— the work in question having been, from the first, entitled an "Oriental Romance." A much worse mistake (because wilful, and with no very charitable design) was that of certain persons, who would have it that the poem was meant to be epic! — Even Mr. D'Israeli has, for the sake of a theory, given in to this very gratuitous assumption: — "The Anacreontic poet," he says, "remains only Anacreontic in his Epic."

" Really and truly, I want you to make a great hit, if only out of self-love, because we happen to be old cronies; and I have no doubt you will — I am sure you *can*. But you are, I'll be sworn, in a devil of a pucker; and *I* am *not* at your elbow, and Rogers *is*. I envy him; which is not fair, because he does not envy any body. Mind you send to me — that is, make Murray send — the moment you are forth.

" I have been very ill with a slow fever, which at last took to flying, and became as quick as need be. * But, at length, after a week of half-delirium, burning skin, thirst, hot headach, horrible pulsation, and no sleep, by the blessing of barley water, and refusing to see any physician, I recovered. It is an epidemic of the place, which is annual, and visits strangers. Here follow some versicles, which I made one sleepless night.

" I read the ' Christabel; '
Very well:
I read the ' Missionary; '
Pretty — very:
I tried at ' Ilderim; '
Ahem;
I read a sheet of ' Marg'ret of *Anjou*; '
Can you?

* In a note to Mr. Murray, subjoined to some corrections for Manfred, he says, " Since I wrote to you last, the *slow* fever I wot of thought proper to mend its pace, and became similar to one which I caught some years ago in the marshes of Elis, in the Morea."

I turn'd a page of * * 's 'Waterloo;'
Pooh! pooh!
I look'd at Wordsworth's milk-white 'Rylstone Doe:'
Hillo!
&c. &c. &c.

"I have not the least idea where I am going, nor what I am to do. I wished to have gone to Rome; but at present it is pestilent with English,—a parcel of staring boobies, who go about gaping and wishing to be at once cheap and magnificent. A man is a fool who travels now in France or Italy, till this tribe of wretches is swept home again. In two or three years the first rush will be over, and the Continent will be roomy and agreeable.

"I stayed at Venice chiefly because it is not one of their 'dens of thieves;' and here they but pause and pass. In Switzerland it was really noxious. Luckily, I was early, and had got the prettiest place on all the Lake before they were quickened into motion with the rest of the reptiles. But they crossed me every where. I met a family of children and old women half-way up the Wengen Alp (by the Jungfrau) upon mules, some of them too old and others too young to be the least aware of what they saw.

"By the way, I think the Jungfrau, and all that region of Alps, which I traversed in September—going to the very top of the Wengen, which is not the highest (the Jungfrau itself is inaccessible) but the best point of view—much finer than Mont-Blanc and Chamouni, or the Simplon. I kept a

journal of the whole for my sister Augusta, part of which she copied and let Murray see.

"I wrote a sort of mad Drama, for the sake of introducing the Alpine scenery in description: and this I sent lately to Murray. Almost all the *dram. pers.* are spirits, ghosts, or magicians, and the scene is in the Alps and the other world, so you may suppose what a Bedlam tragedy it must be: make him show it you. I sent him all three acts piece-meal, by the post, and suppose they have arrived.

"I have now written to you at least six letters, or letter*ets*, and all I have received in return is a note about the length you used to write from Bury Street to St. James's Street, when we used to dine with Rogers, and talk laxly, and go to parties, and hear poor Sheridan now and then. Do you remember one night he was so tipsy that I was forced to put his cocked hat on for him,—for he could not,—and I let him down at Brookes's, much as he must since have been let down into his grave. Heigh ho! I wish I was drunk—but I have nothing but this d—d barley-water before me.

"I am still in love,—which is a dreadful drawback in quitting a place, and I can't stay at Venice much longer. What I shall do on this point I don't know. The girl means to go with me, but I do not like this for her own sake. I have had so many conflicts in my own mind on this subject, that I am not at all sure they did not help me to the fever I mentioned above. I am certainly very much attached to her, and I have cause to be so, if you knew all. But she has a child; and though, like all the 'children of the

sun,' she consults nothing but passion, it is necessary I should think for both; and it is only the virtuous, like * * * *, who can afford to give up husband and child, and live happy ever after.

"The Italian ethics are the most singular ever met with. The perversion, not only of action, but of reasoning, is singular in the women. It is not that they do not consider the thing itself as wrong, and very wrong, but *love* (the *sentiment* of love) is not merely an excuse for it, but makes it an *actual virtue*, provided it is disinterested, and not a *caprice*, and is confined to one object. They have awful notions of constancy; for I have seen some ancient figures of eighty pointed out as amorosi of forty, fifty, and sixty years' standing. I can't say I have ever seen a husband and wife so coupled.

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. Marianna, to whom I have just translated what I have written on our subject to you, says—'If you loved me thoroughly, you would not make so many fine reflections, which are only good *for-birsi i scarpi*,'—that is, 'to clean shoes withal,'—a Venetian proverb of appreciation, which is applicable to reasoning of all kinds."

LETTER 268. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, March 25. 1817.

"Your letter and enclosure are safe; but 'English gentlemen' are very rare—at least in Venice. I doubt whether there are at present any, save the consul and vice-consul, with neither of whom I have

the slightest acquaintance. The moment I can pounce upon a witness, I will send the deed properly signed: but must he necessarily be genteel? Venice is not a place where the English are gregarious; their pigeon-houses are Florence, Naples, Rome, &c.; and to tell you the truth, this was one reason why I stayed here till the season of the purgation of Rome from these people, which is infected with them at this time, should arrive. Besides, I abhor the nation and the nation me; it is impossible for me to describe my *own* sensation on that point, but it may suffice to say, that, if I met with any of the race in the beautiful parts of Switzerland, the most distant glimpse or aspect of them poisoned the whole scene, and I do not choose to have the Pantheon, and St. Peter's, and the Capitol, spoiled for me too. This feeling may be probably owing to recent events; but it does not exist the less, and while it exists, I shall conceal it as little as any other.

"I have been seriously ill with a fever, but it is gone. I believe or suppose it was the indigenous fever of the place, which comes every year at this time, and of which the physicians change the name annually, to despatch the people sooner. It is a kind of typhus, and kills occasionally. It was pretty smart, but nothing particular, and has left me some debility and a great appetite. There are a good many ill at present, I suppose, of the same.

"I feel sorry for Horner, if there was any thing in the world to make him like it; and still more sorry for his friends, as there was much to make

them regret him. I had not heard of his death till by your letter.

"Some weeks ago I wrote to you my acknowledgments of Walter Scott's article. Now I know it to be his, it cannot add to my good opinion of him, but it adds to that of myself. *He*, and Gifford, and Moore, are the only *regulars* I ever knew who had nothing of the *garrison* about their manner: no nonsense, nor affectations, look you! As for the rest whom I have known, there was always more or less of the author about them—the pen peeping from behind the ear, and the thumbs a little inky, or so.

"'Lalla Rookh'—you must recollect that, in the way of title, the '*Giaour*' has never been pronounced to this day; and both it and Childe Harold sounded very facetious to the blue-bottles of wit and humour about town, till they were taught and startled into a proper deportment; and therefore Lalla Rookh, which is very orthodox and oriental, is as good a title as need be, if not better. I could wish rather that he had not called it 'a *Persian Tale*;' firstly, because we have had Turkish Tales, and Hindoo Tales, and Assyrian Tales, already; and *tale* is a word of which it repents me to have nicknamed poesy. 'Fable' would be better; and, secondly, 'Persian Tale' reminds one of the lines of Pope on Ambrose Phillips; though no one can say, to be sure, that this tale has been 'turned for half-a-crown;' still it is as well to avoid such clashings. 'Persian *Story*'—why not?—or Romance? I feel as anxious for Moore as I could do for myself, for the soul of

me, and I would not have him succeed otherwise than splendidly, which I trust he will do.

"With regard to the 'Witch Drama,' I sent all the three acts by post, week after week, within this last month. I repeat that I have not an idea if it is good or bad. If bad, it must, on no account, be risked in publication; if good, it is at your service. I value it at *three hundred* guineas, or less, if you like it. Perhaps, if published, the best way will be to add it to your winter volume, and not publish separately. The price will show you I don't pique myself upon it; so speak out. You may put it in the fire, if you like, and Gifford don't like.

"The Armenian Grammar is published—that is, *one;* the other is still in MS. My illness has prevented me from moving this month past, and I have done nothing more with the Armenian.

"Of Italian or rather Lombard manners, I could tell you little or nothing: I went two or three times to the governor's conversazione, (and if you go once, you are free to go always,) at which, as I only saw very plain women, a formal circle, in short a *worst sort* of rout, I did not go again. I went to Academie and to Madame Albrizzi's, where I saw pretty much the same thing, with the addition of some literati, who are the same *blue**, by ——, all the world over. I fell in love the first week with Madame **, and I

* Whenever a word or passage occurs (as in this instance) which Lord Byron would have pronounced emphatically in speaking, it appears, in his handwriting, as if written with something of the same vehemence.

have continued so ever since, because she is very pretty and pleasing, and talks Venetian, which amuses me, and is naïve.

" Very truly, &c.

" P. S. Pray send the red tooth-powder by a *safe hand*, and speedily.*

" To hook the reader, you, John Murray,
Have publish'd ' Anjou's Margaret,'
Which won't be sold off in a hurry
(At least, it has not been as yet);
And then, still further to bewilder 'em,
Without remorse you set up ' Ilderim ;'
So mind you don't get into debt,
Because as how, if you should fail,
These books would be but baddish bail.
And mind you do *not* let escape
These rhymes to Morning Post or Perry,
Which would be *very* treacherous — *very*,
And get me into such a scrape!
For, firstly, I should have to sally,
All in my little boat, against a *Gally;*
And, should I chance to slay the Assyrian wight,
Have next to combat with the female knight.

" You may show these matters to Moore and the *select*, but not to the *profane;* and tell Moore, that I wonder he don't write to one now and then."

* Here follow the same rhymes ("I read the Christabel," &c.) which have already been given in one of his letters to myself.

LETTER 269. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, March 31. 1817.

"You will begin to think my epistolary offerings (to whatever altar you please to devote them) rather prodigal. But until you answer, I shall not abate, because you deserve no better. I know you are well, because I hear of your voyaging to London and the environs, which I rejoice to learn, because your note alarmed me by the purgation and phlebotomy therein prognosticated. I also hear of your being in the press; all which, methinks, might have furnished you with subject-matter for a middle-sized letter, considering that I am in foreign parts, and that the last month's advertisements and obituary would be absolute news to me from your Tramontane country.

"I told you, in my last, I have had a smart fever. There is an epidemic in the place; but I suspect, from the symptoms, that mine was a fever of my own, and had nothing in common with the low, vulgar typhus, which is at this moment decimating Venice, and which has half unpeopled Milan, if the accounts be true. This malady has sorely discomfited my serving men, who want sadly to be gone away, and get me to remove. But, besides my natural perversity, I was seasoned in Turkey, by the continual whispers of the plague, against apprehensions of contagion. Besides which, apprehension would not prevent it; and then I am still in love, and 'forty thousand' fevers should not make me stir before my minute, while under the influence of that paramount

delirium. Seriously speaking, there is a malady rife in the city—a dangerous one, they say. However, mine did not appear so, though it was not pleasant.

"This is Passion-week — and twilight — and all the world are at vespers. They have an eternal churching, as in all Catholic countries, but are not so bigoted as they seem to be in Spain.

"I don't know whether to be glad or sorry that you are leaving Mayfield. Had I ever been at Newstead during your stay there, (except during the winter of 1813–14, when the roads were impracticable,) we should have been within hail, and I should like to have made a giro of the Peak with you. I know that country well, having been all over it when a boy. Was you ever in Dovedale? I can assure you there are things in Derbyshire as noble as Greece or Switzerland. But you had always a lingering after London, and I don't wonder at it. I liked it as well as any body, myself, now and then.

"Will you remember me to Rogers? whom I presume to be flourishing, and whom I regard as our poetical papa. You are his lawful son, and I the illegitimate. Has he begun yet upon Sheridan? If you see our republican friend, Leigh Hunt, pray present my remembrances. I saw about nine months ago that he was in a row (like my friend Hobhouse) with the Quarterly Reviewers. For my part, I never could understand these quarrels of authors with critics and with one another. 'For God's sake, gentlemen, what do they mean?'

"What think you of your countryman, Maturin?

I take some credit to myself for having done my best to bring out Bertram; but I must say my colleagues were quite as ready and willing. Walter Scott, however, was the *first* who mentioned him, which he did to me, with great commendation, in 1815; and it is to this casualty, and two or three other accidents, that this very clever fellow owed his first and well-merited public success. What a chance is fame!

"Did I tell you that I have translated two Epistles? — a correspondence between St. Paul and the Corinthians, not to be found in our version, but the Armenian — but which seems to me very orthodox, and I have done it into scriptural prose English.*

"Ever," &c.

* The only plausible claim of these epistles to authenticity arises from the circumstance of St. Paul having (according to the opinion of Mosheim and others) written an epistle to the Corinthians, before that which we now call his first. They are, however, universally given up as spurious. Though frequently referred to as existing in the Armenian, by Primate Usher, Johan. Gregorius, and other learned men, they were for the first time, I believe, translated from that language by the two Whistons, who subjoined the correspondence, with a Greek and Latin version, to their edition of the Armenian History of Moses of Chorene, published in 1736.

The translation by Lord Byron is, as far as I can learn, the first that has ever been attempted in English; and as, proceeding from *his* pen, it must possess, of course, additional interest, the reader will not be displeased to find it in the Appendix. Annexed to the copy in my possession are the following words in his own handwriting:— "Done into English

LETTER 270. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April 2. 1817.

"I sent you the whole of the Drama at *three several* times, act by act, in separate covers. I hope that you have, or will receive, some or the whole of it.

"So Love has a conscience. By Diana! I shall make him take back the box, though it were Pandora's. The discovery of its intrinsic silver occurred on sending it to have the lid adapted to admit Marianna's portrait. Of course I had the box remitted *in statu quo*, and had the picture set in another, which suits it (the picture) very well. The defaulting box is not touched, hardly, and was not in the man's hands above an hour.

"I am aware of what you say of Otway; and am a very great admirer of his, — all except of that maudlin b—h of chaste lewdness and blubbering curiosity, Belvidera, whom I utterly despise, abhor, and detest. But the story of Marino Faliero is different, and, I think, so much finer, that I wish Otway had taken it instead: the head conspiring against the body for refusal of redress for a real injury, — jealousy — treason, with the more fixed and inveterate passions (mixed with policy) of an old or

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by me, January, February, 1817, at the Convent of San Lazaro, with the aid and exposition of the Armenian text by the Father Paschal Aucher, Armenian friar.— BYRON. I had also (he adds) the Latin text, but it is in many places very corrupt, and with great omissions."

elderly man — the devil himself could not have a finer subject, and he is your only tragic dramatist.

" There is still, in the Doge's palace, the black veil painted over Faliero's picture, and the staircase whereon he was first crowned Doge, and subsequently decapitated. This was the thing that most struck my imagination in Venice — more than the Rialto, which I visited for the sake of Shylock; and more, too, than Schiller's '*Armenian*,' a novel which took a great hold of me when a boy. It is also called the 'Ghost Seer,' and I never walked down St. Mark's by moonlight without thinking of it, and 'at nine o'clock he died!'—But I hate things *all fiction;* and therefore the *Merchant* and *Othello* have no great associations to me: but *Pierre* has. There should always be some foundation of fact for the most airy fabric, and pure invention is but the talent of a liar.

" Maturin's tragedy. — By your account of him last year to me, he seemed a bit of a coxcomb, personally. Poor fellow! to be sure, he had had a long seasoning of adversity, which is not so hard to bear as t'other thing. I hope that this won't throw him back into the 'slough of Despond.'

" You talk of 'marriage;'— ever since my own funeral, the word makes me giddy, and throws me into a cold sweat. Pray, don't repeat it.

" You should close with Madame de Staël. This will be her best work, and permanently historical; it is on her father, the Revolution, and Buonaparte, &c. Bonstetten told me in Switzerland it was *very*

great. I have not seen it myself, but the author often. She was very kind to me at Copet.

"There have been two articles in the Venice papers, one a Review of Glenarvon * * * *, and the other a Review of Childe Harold, in which it proclaims me the most rebellious and contumacious admirer of Buonaparte now surviving in Europe. Both these articles are translations from the Literary Gazette of German Jena.

"Tell me that Walter Scott is better. I would not have him ill for the world. I suppose it was by sympathy that I had my fever at the same time.

"I joy in the success of your Quarterly, but I must still stick by the Edinburgh; Jeffrey has done so by me, I must say, through every thing, and this is more than I deserved from him. I have more than once acknowledged to you by letter the 'Article' (and articles); say that you have received the said letters, as I do not otherwise know what letters arrive. Both Reviews came, but nothing more. M.'s play and the extract not yet come.

"Write to say whether my Magician has arrived, with all his scenes, spells, &c. Yours ever, &c.

"It is useless to send to the *Foreign Office:* nothing arrives to me by that conveyance. I suppose some zealous clerk thinks it a Tory duty to prevent it."

LETTER 271. TO MR. ROGERS.

"Venice, April 4. 1817.

"It is a considerable time since I wrote to you last, and I hardly know why I should trouble you

now, except that I think you will not be sorry to hear from me now and then. You and I were never correspondents, but always something better, which is, very good friends.

"I saw your friend Sharp in Switzerland, or rather in the German *territory* (which is and is not Switzerland), and he gave Hobhouse and me a very good route for the Bernese Alps; however we took another from a German, and went by Clarens, the Dent de Jamen to Montbovon, and through Simmenthal to Thoun, and so on to Lauterbrounn; except that from thence to the Grindelwald, instead of round about, we went right over the Wengen Alps' very summit, and being close under the Jungfrau, saw it, its glaciers, and heard the avalanches in all their glory, having famous weather there*for*. We of course went from the Grindelwald over the Sheidech to Brientz and its lake; past the Reichenbach and all that mountain road, which reminded me of Albania and Ætolia and Greece, except that the people here were more civilised and rascally. I do not think so very much of Chamouni (except the source of the Arveron, to which we went up to the teeth of the ice, so as to look into and touch the cavity, against the warning of the guides, only one of whom would go with us so close,) as of the Jungfrau, and the Pissevache, and Simplon, which are quite out of all mortal competition.

"I was at Milan about a moon, and saw Monti and some other living curiosities, and thence on to Verona, where I did not forget your story of the assassination during your sojourn there, and brought away with me some fragments of Juliet's tomb, and

a lively recollection of the amphitheatre. The Countess Goetz (the governor's wife here) told me that there is still a ruined castle of the Montecchi between Verona and Vicenza. I have been at Venice since November, but shall proceed to Rome shortly. For my deeds here, are they not written in my letters to the unreplying Thomas Moore? to him I refer you: he has received them all, and not answered one.

"Will you remember me to Lord and Lady Holland? I have to thank the former for a book which I have not yet received, but expect to reperuse with great pleasure on my return, viz. the 2d edition of Lope de Vega. I have heard of Moore's forthcoming poem: he cannot wish himself more success than I wish and augur for him. I have also heard great things of 'Tales of my Landlord,' but I have not yet received them; by all accounts they beat even Waverley, &c., and are by the same author. Maturin's second tragedy has, it seems, failed, for which I should think any body would be sorry. My health was very victorious till within the last month, when I had a fever. There is a typhus in these parts, but I don't think it was that. However, I got well without a physician or drugs.

"I forgot to tell you that, last autumn, I furnished Lewis with 'bread and salt' for some days at Diodati, in reward for which (besides his conversation) he translated 'Goethe's Faust' to me by word of mouth, and I set him by the ears with Madame de Staël about the slave trade. I am indebted for many and kind courtesies to our Lady of Copet, and I now

love her as much as I always did her works, of which I was and am a great admirer. When are you to begin with Sheridan? what are you doing, and how do you do? Ever very truly," &c.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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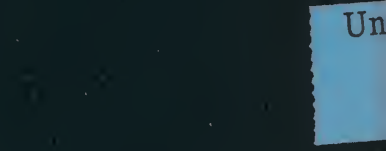
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